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THE

PLAYS

OF

WILILAM SHAKSPEARE.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

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THE

PLAYS

OF

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE,

Accurately printed from the text of the Corrected Copy left by the late

GEORGE STEEVENS, ESQ.

WITH GLOSSARIAL NOTES.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

CONTAINING

MEASURE FOR MEASURE;
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING;
MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM;
LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

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THE

PLAYS

OF

WILILAM SHAKSPEARE.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

Though it do well, I do not relish well
Their loud applause, and *aves*[8] vehement;
Nor do I think the man of safe discretion,
That does affect it. Once more, fare you well.

Ang. The heavens give safety to your purposes!

Escal. Lead forth, and bring you back in happiness.

Duke. I thank you: Fare you well. [*Exit.*

Escal. I shall desire you, sir, to give me leave
To have free speech with you; and it concerns me
To look into the bottom of my place:
A power I have; but of what strength and nature
I am not yet instructed.

Ang. 'Tis so with me:—Let us withdraw together,
And we may soon our satisfaction have
Touching that point.

Escal. I'll wait upon your honour.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Street.

Enter LUCIO *and two* Gentlemen.

Lucio. If the duke, with the other dukes, come not to composition with the king of Hungary, why, then all the dukes fall upon the king.

1 *Gent.* Heaven grant us its peace, but not the king of Hungary's!

2 *Gent.* Amen.

[8] Hailings.

Lucio. Thou concludest like the sanctimonious pirate, that went to sea with the ten commandments, but scraped one out of the table.

2 *Gent.* Thou shalt not steal?

Lucio. Ay, that he razed.

1 *Gent.* Why, 'twas a commandment to command the captain and all the rest from their functions; they put forth to steal: There's not a soldier of us all, that, in the thanksgiving before meat, doth relish the petition well that prays for peace.

2 *Gent.* I never heard any soldier dislike it.

Lucio. I believe thee; for, I think, thou never wast where grace was said.

2 *Gent.* No? a dozen times at least.

1 *Gent.* What? in metre?

Lucio. In any proportion,[9] or in any language.

1 *Gent.* I think, or in any religion.

Lucio. Ay! why not? Grace is grace, despite of all controversy: As for example; Thou thyself art a wicked villain, despite of all grace.

1 *Gent.* Well, there went but a pair of sheers between us.[1]

Lucio. I grant; as there may between the lists and the velvet: Thou art the list.

1 *Gent.* And thou the velvet: thou art good velvet; thou art a three-pil'd piece, I warrant thee: I had as lief be a list of an English kersey, as be pil'd, as thou art pil'd, for a French velvet.[2] Do I speak feelingly now?

[9] Measure. [1] A cut of the same cloth.

[2] A jest on the loss of hair by the French disease.

Lucio. I think thou dost; and, indeed, with most painful feeling of thy speech: I will, out of thine own confession, learn to begin thy health; but, whilst I live, forget to drink after thee.

1 *Gent.* I think, I have done myself wrong; have I not?

2 *Gent.* Yes, that thou hast; whether thou art tainted, or free.

Lucio. Behold, behold, where madam Mitigation comes! I have purchased as many diseases under her roof, as come to—

2 *Gent.* To what, I pray?

1 *Gent.* Judge.

2 *Gent.* To three thousand dollars a-year.

1 *Gent.* Ay, and more.

Lucio. A French crown[3] more.

1 *Gent.* Thou art always figuring diseases in me: but thou art full of error; I am sound.

Lucio. Nay, not as one would say, healthy; but sore sound, asthings that are hollow: thy bones are hollow; impiety has made a feast of thee.

Enter Bawd.

1 *Gent.* How now? Which of your hips has the most profound sciatica?

Bawd. Well, well; there's one yonder arrested, and carried to prison, was worth five thousand of you all.

1 *Gent.* Who's that, I pray thee?

Bawd. Marry, sir, that's Claudio, signior Claudio.

[3] *Corona Veneris.*

1 *Gent.* Claudio to prison! 'tis not so.

Bawd. Nay, but I know, 'tis so: I saw him arrested; saw him carried away; and, which is more, within these three days his head's to be chopped off.

Lucio. But, after all this fooling, I would not have it so: Art thou sure of this?

Bawd. I am too sure of it: and it is for getting madam Julietta with child.

Lucio. Believe me, this may be: he promised to meet me two hours since; and he was ever precise in promise-keeping.

2 *Gent.* Besides, you know, it draws something near to the speech we had to such a purpose.

1 *Gent.* But most of all, agreeing with the proclamation.

Lucio. Away; let's go learn the truth of it.

[*Exeunt* Lucio *and* Gentlemen.

Bawd. Thus, what with the war, what with the sweat,[4] what with the gallows, and what with poverty, I am custom-shrunk. How now? what's the news with you?

Enter Clown.

Clo. Yonder man is carried to prison.

Bawd. Well; what has he done?

Clo. A woman.

Bawd. But what's his offence?

Clo. Groping for trouts in a peculiar river.

Bawd. What, is there a maid with child by him?

Clo. No; but there's a woman with maid by him: You have not heard of the proclamation, have you?

[4] The sweating sickness.

Bawd. What, proclamation, man.

Clo. All houses in the suburbs of Vienna must be pluck'd down.

Bawd. And what shall become of those in the city?

Clo. They shall stand for seed: they had gone down too, but that a wise burgher put in for them.

Bawd. But shall all our houses of resort in the suburbs be pull'd down?

Clo. To the ground, mistress.

Bawd. Why, here's a change, indeed, in the commonwealth! What shall become of me?

Clo. Come; fear not you; good counsellors lack no clients: though you change your place, you need not change your trade; I'll be your tapster still. Courage; there will be pity taken on you: you that have worn your eyes almost out in the service, you will be considered.

Bawd. What's to do here, Thomas Tapster? Let's withdraw.

Clo. Here comes signior Claudio, led by the provost to prison: and there's madam Juliet. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The same.

Enter Provost,[4] CLAUDIO, JULIET, *and* Officers; LUCIO, *and two* Gentlemen.

Claud. Fellow, why dost thou show me thus to the world?
Bear me to prison, where I am committed.

[4] Gaoler.

Prov. I do it not in evil disposition,
But from lord Angelo by special charge.

Claud. Thus can the demi-god, Authority,
Make us pay down for our offence by weight.—
The words of heaven;—on whom it will, it will;
On whom it will not, so; yet still 'tis just.

Lucio. Why, how now, Claudio? whence comes this restraint?

Claud. From too much liberty, my Lucio, liberty:
As surfeit is the father of much fast,
So every scope by the immoderate use
Turns to restraint: Our natures do pursue,
(Like rats that ravin[5] down their proper bane,)
A thirsty evil; and when we drink, we die.

Lucio. If I could speak so wisely under an arrest, I would send for certain of my creditors: And yet, to say the truth, I had as lief have the foppery of freedom, as the morality of imprisonment.—What's thy offence, Claudio?

Claud. What, but to speak of would offend again.

Lucio. What is it? murder?

Claud. No.

Lucio. Lechery?

Claud. Call it so.

Prov. Away, sir; you must go.

Claud. One word, good friend:—Lucio, a word with you. [*Takes him aside.*

Lucio. A hundred, if they'll do you any good.—Is lechery so look'd after?

Claud. Thus stands it with me:—Upon a true contract,

[5] Voraciously devour.

I got possession of Julietta's bed;
You know the lady; she is fast my wife,
Save that we do the denunciation lack
Of outward order: this we came not to,
Only for propagation of a dower
Remaining in the coffer of her friends;
From whom we thought it meet to hide our love,
Till time had made them for us. But it chances,
The stealth of our most mutual entertainment,
With character too gross, is writ on Juliet.

Lucio. With child, perhaps?

Claud. Unhappily, even so.
And the new deputy now for the duke,—
Whether it be the fault and glimpse of newness;
Or whether that the body public be
A horse whereon the governor doth ride,
Who, newly in the seat, that it may know
He can command, lets it straight feel the spur:
Whether the tyranny be in his place,
Or in his eminence that fills it up,
I stagger in:—But this new governor
Awakes me all the enrolled penalties,
Which have, like unscour'd armour, hung by the wall
So long, that nineteen zodiacks[6] have gone round,
And none of them been worn; and, for a name,
Now puts the drowsy and neglected act
Freshly on me:—'tis surely, for a name.

Lucio. I warrant, it is: and thy head stands so tickle[7] on thy shoulders, that a milk-maid, if she be in love, may sigh it off. Send after the duke, and appeal to him.

[6] Yearly circles. [7] Ticklish.

Claud. I have done so, but he's not to be found.
I pr'ythee, Lucio, do me this kind service:
This day my sister should the cloister enter,
And there receive her approbation:[8]
Acquaint her with the danger of my state;
Implore her, in my voice, that she make friends
To the strict deputy; bid herself assay him;
I have great hope in that: for in her youth
There is a prone[9] and speechless dialect,
Such as moves men; beside, she hath prosperous art
When she will play with reason and discourse,
And well she can persuade.

Lucio. I pray, she may: as well for the encouragement of the like, which else would stand under grievous imposition; as for the enjoying of thy life, who I would be sorry should be thus foolishly lost at a game of tick-tack. I'll to her.

Claud. I thank you, good friend Lucio.

Lucio. Within two hours,——

Claud. Come, officer, away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Monastery.

Enter DUKE *and* Friar Thomas.

Duke. No; holy father; throw away that thought;
Believe not that the dribbling dart of love
Can pierce a cómplete bosom:[1] why I desire thee
To give me secret harbour, hath a purpose

[8] Enter on her probation. [9] Prompt.
[1] Completely armed.

More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends
Of burning youth.

Fri. May your grace speak of it?

Duke. My holy sir, none better knows than you
How I have ever lov'd the life remov'd;[2]
And held in idle price to haunt assemblies,
Where youth, and cost, and witless bravery keeps[3]
I have delivered to lord Angelo
(A man of stricture,[5] and firm abstinence,)
My absolute power and place here in Vienna,
And he supposes me travell'd to Poland;
For so I have strew'd it in the common ear,
And so it is receiv'd: Now, pious sir,
You will demand of me, why I do this?

Fri. Gladly, my lord.

Duke. We have strict statutes, and most biting laws,
(The needful bits and curbs for head-strong steeds)
Which for these fourteen years we have let sleep;
Even like an o'er-grown lion in a cave,
That goes not out to prey: Now, as fond fathers
Having bound up the threat'ning twigs of birch,
Only to stick it in their children's sight,
For terror, not to use; in time the rod
Becomes more mock'd, than fear'd: so our decrees,
Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead;
And liberty plucks justice by the nose;
The baby beats the nurse, and quite athwart
Goes all decorum.

Fri. It rested in your grace
To unloose this tied-up justice, when you pleas'd:

[2] Retired. [3] Showy dress resides. [5] Strictness.

And it in you more dreadful would have seem'd,
Than in lord Angelo.

Duke. I do fear, too dreadful:
Sith[6] 'twas my fault to give the people scope,
'Twould be my tyranny to strike, and gall them
For what I bid them do: For we bid this be done,
When evil deeds have their permissive pass,
And not the punishment. Therefore, indeed, my father,
I have on Angelo impos'd the office;
Who may, in the ambush of my name, strike home,
And yet my nature never in the sight,
To do it slander: And to behold his sway,
I will, as 'twere a brother of your order,
Visit both prince and people: therefore, I pr'ythee,
Supply me with the habit, and instruct me
How I may formally in person bear me
Like a true friar. More reasons for this action,
At our more leisure shall I render you;
Only, this one:—Lord Angelo is precise;
Stands at a guard[7] with envy; scarce confesses
That his blood flows, or that his appetite
Is more to bread than stone: Hence shall we see,
If power change purpose, what our seemers be.

[*Exeunt.*

[6] Since. [7] his defence.

SCENE V.

A Nunnery.

Enter ISABELLA *and* FRANCISCA.

Isab. And have you nuns no further privileges?
Fran. Are not these large enough?
Isab. Yes, truly: I speak not as desiring more;
But rather wishing a more strict restraint
Upon the sister-hood, the votarists of saint Clare.
Lucio. Ho! Peace be in this place? [*Within.*
Isab. Who's that which calls?
Fran. It is a man's voice: Gentle Isabella,
Turn you the key, and know his business of him;
You may, I may not; you are yet unsworn:
When you have vow'd, you must not speak with men,
But in the presence of the prioress:
Then, if you speak, you must not show your face;
Or, if you show your face, you must not speak.
He calls again; I pray you, answer him.
[*Exit* FRANCISCA.
Isab. Peace and prosperity! Who is't that calls?

Enter LUCIO.

Lucio. Hail, virgin, if you be; as those cheek-roses
Proclaim you are no less! Can you so stead me,
As bring me to the sight of Isabella,
A novice of this place, and the fair sister
To her unhappy brother Claudio?
Isab. Why her unhappy brother? let me ask;
The rather, for I now must make you know

I am that Isabella, and his sister.

Lucio. Gentle and fair, your brother kindly greets you:

Not to be weary with you, he's in prison.

Isab. Woe me! For what?

Lucio. For that, which, if myself might be his judge,
He should receive his punishment in thanks:
He hath got his friend with child.

Isab. Sir, make me not your story.[8]

Lucio. It is true.
I would not—though 'tis my familiar sin
With maids to seem the lapwing, and to jest,
Tongue far from heart,—play with all virgins so:
I hold you as a thing ensky'd, and sainted;
By your renouncement, an immortal spirit;
And to be talk'd with in sincerity,
As with a saint.

Isab. You do blaspheme the good, in mocking me.

Lucio. Do not believe it. Fewness and truth,[9] 'tis thus:
Your brother and his lover have embrac'd:
As those that feed grow full; as blossoming time,
That from the seedness the bare fallow brings
To teeming foison;[1] even so her plenteous womb
Expresseth his full tilth[2] and husbandry.

Isab. Some one with child by him?—My cousin Juliet?

Lucio. Is she your cousin?

Isab. Adoptedly; as school-maids change their names,

[8] Do not make a jest of me. [9] In few and true words.
[1] Breeding plenty. [2] Tilling.

By vain though apt affection.

Lucio. She it is.

Isab. O, let him marry her!

Lucio. This is the point.

The duke is very strangely gone from hence;
Bore many gentlemen, myself being one,
In hand, and hope of action: but we do learn
By those that know the very nerves of state,
His givings out were of an infinite distance
From his true-meant design. Upon his place,
And with full line[3] of his authority,
Governs lord Angelo; a man, whose blood
Is very snow-broth; one who never feels
The wanton stings and motions of the sense;
But doth rebate and blunt his natural edge
With profits of the mind, study and fast.
He (to give fear to use and liberty,
Which have, for long, run by the hideous law,
As mice by lions,) hath pick'd out an act,
Under whose heavy sense your brother's life
Falls into forfeit: he arrests him on it;
And follows close the rigour of the statute,
To make him an example: all hope is gone,
Unless you have the grace[4] by your fair prayer
To soften Angelo: And that's my pith
Of business 'twixt you and your poor brother.

Isab. Doth he so seek his life?

Lucio. Has censur'd[5] him
Already; and, as I hear, the provost hath
A warrant for his execution.

Isab. Alas! what poor ability's in me

[3] Extent. [4] Power of gaining favour. [5] Sentenced.

To do him good?

Lucio. Assay the power you have.

Isab. My power! Alas! I doubt,—

Lucio. Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we oft might win,
By fearing to attempt: Go to lord Angelo,
And let him learn to know, when maidens sue,
Men give like gods; but when they weep and kneel,
All their petitions are as freely theirs
As they themselves would owe[6] them.

Isab. I'll see what I can do.

Lucio. But speedily.

Isab. I will about it straight;
No longer staying but to give the mother[7]
Notice of my affair. I humbly thank you:
Commend me to my brother: soon at night
I'll send him certain word of my success.

Lucio. I take my leave of you.

Isab. Good sir, adieu.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. A Hall in Angelo's *House.*

Enter ANGELO, ESCALUS, *a* Justice, Provost, Officers, *and other Attendants.*

Ang. We must not make a scare-crow of the law,
Setting it up to fear[8] the birds of prey,
And let it keep one shape, till custom make it
Their perch, and not their terror.

[6] Have. [7] Abbess. [8] Scare.

Escal. Ay, but yet
Let us be keen, and rather cut a little,
Than fall, and bruise to death: Alas! this gentleman,
Whom I would save, had a most noble father.
Let but your honour know,[9]
(Whom I believe to be most strait in virtue,)
That, in the working of your own affections,
Had time coher'd[1] with place, or place with wishing,
Or that the resolute acting of your blood
Could have attain'd the effect of your own purpose,
Whether you had not sometime in your life
Err'd in this point which now you censure him,
And pull'd the law upon you.

Ang. 'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,
Another thing to fall. I not deny,
The jury, passing on the prisoner's life,
May, in the sworn twelve, have a thief or two
Guiltier than him they try: What's open made to justice,
That justice seizes. What know the laws,
That thieves do pass[2] on thieves? 'Tis very pregnant,[3]
The jewel that we find, we stoop and take it,
Because we see it; but what we do not see,
We tread upon, and never think of it.
You may not so extenuate his offence,
For[4] I have had such faults; but rather tell me,
When I, that censure[5] him, do so offend,
Let mine own judgment pattern out my death,
And nothing come in partial. Sir, he must die.

[9] Examine. [1] Suited. [2] Pass judgment.
[3] Plain. [4] Because. [5] Sentence.

Escal. Be it as your wisdom will.

Ang. Where is the provost?

Prov. Here, if it like your honour.

Ang. See that Claudio
Be executed by nine to-morrow morning:
Bring him his confessor, let him be prepared;
For that's the utmost of his pilgrimage.
[*Exit* Provost.

Escal. Well, heaven forgive him; and forgive us all!
Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall:
Some run from brakes[6] of vice, and answer none;
And some condemned for a fault alone.

Enter ELBOW, FROTH, Clown, Officers, *&c.*

Elb. Come, bring them away: if these be good people in a common-weal,[7] that do nothing but use their abuses in common houses, I know no law; bring them away.

Ang. How now, sir! What's your name? and what's the matter?

Elb. If it please your honour, I am the poor duke's constable, and my name is Elbow; I do lean upon justice, sir, and do bring in here before your good honour two notorious benefactors.

Ang. Benefactors? Well; what benefactors are they? are they not malefactors?

Elb. If it please your honour, I know not well what they are: but precise villains they are, that I am sure of; and void of all profanation in the world, that good christians ought to have.

[6] Thickets, thorny paths of vice. [7] Wealth.

Escal. This comes off well;[8] here's a wise officer.

Ang. Go to: What quality are they of? Elbow is your name? Why dost thou not speak, Elbow?

Clo. He cannot, sir; he's out at elbow.

Ang. What are you, sir?

Elb. He, sir? a tapster, sir; parcel[9]-bawd; one that serves a bad woman; whose house, sir, was, as they say, pluck'd down in the suburbs; and now she professes[1] a hot-house, which, I think, is a very ill house too.

Escal. How know you that?

Elb. My wife, sir, whom I detest[2] before heaven and your honour,—

Escal. How! thy wife?

Elb. Ay, sir; whom, I thank heaven, is an honest woman,—

Escal. Dost thou detest her therefore?

Elb. I say, sir, I will detest myself also, as well as she, that this house, if it be not a bawd's house, it is pity of her life, for it is a naughty house.

Escal. How dost thou know that, constable?

Elb. Marry, sir, by my wife; who, if she had been a woman cardinally given, might have been accused in fornication, adultery, and all uncleanliness there.

Escal. By the woman's means?

Elb. Ay, sir, by mistress Overdone's means: but as she spit in his face, so she defied him.

Clo. Sir, if it please your honour, this is not so.

[8] Well told.
[9] Partly.
[1] Keeps a bagnio.
[2] For Protest.

Elb. Prove it before these varlets here, thou honourable man, prove it.

Escal. Do you hear how he misplaces?

[*To* ANGELO.

Clo. Sir, she came in great with child; and longing (saving your honour's reverence,) for stew'd prunes; sir, we had but two in the house, which at that very distant time stood, as it were, in a fruit-dish, a dish of some three pence; your honours have seen such dishes; they are not China dishes, but very good dishes.

Escal. Go to, go to; no matter for the dish, sir.

Clo. No, indeed, sir, not of a pin; you are therein in the right: but, to the point: As I say this mistress Elbow, being, as I say, with child, and being great belly'd, and longing, as I said, for prunes; and having but two in the dish, as I said, master Froth here, this very man, having eaten the rest, as I said, and, as I say, paying for them very honestly;—for, as you know, master Froth, I cou'd not give you three pence again.

Froth. No, indeed.

Clo. Very well: you being then, if you be remember'd, cracking the stones of the foresaid prunes.

Froth. Ay, so I did, indeed.

Clo. Why, very well: I telling you then, if you be remember'd, that such a one, and such a one, were past cure of the thing you wot of, unless they kept very good diet, as I told you.

Froth. All this is true.

Clo. Why, very well then.

Escal. Come, you are a tedious fool: to the purpose.—What was done to Elbow's wife, that he hath cause to complain of? Come me to what was done to her.

Clo. Sir, your honour cannot come to that yet.

Escal. No, sir, nor I mean it not.

Clo. Sir, but you shall come to it, by your honour's leave: And, I beseech you, look into master Froth here, sir; a man of fourscore pound a year; whose father died at Hallowmas:—Was't not at Hallowmas, master Froth?

Froth. All-hollond[3] eve.

Clo. Why, very well; I hope here be truths: He, sir, sitting, as I say, in a lower[4] chair, sir;—'twas in the *Bunch of Grapes*, where, indeed, you have a delight to sit: Have you not?

Froth. I have so; because it is an open room, and good for winter.

Clo. Why, very well then;—I hope here be truths.

Ang. This will last out a night in Russia,
When nights are longest there: I'll take my leave,
And leave you to the hearing of the cause;
Hoping, you'll find good cause to whip them all.

Escal. I think no less: Good morrow to your lordship. [*Exit* ANGELO.
Now, sir, come on: What was done to Elbow's wife, once more?

Clo. Once, sir? there was nothing done to her once.

Elb. I beseech you, sir, ask him what this man did to my wife.

[3] Eve of All Saints day. [4] Easy.

Clo. I beseech your honour, ask me.

Escal. Well, sir: What did this gentleman to her?

Clo. I beseech you, sir, look in this gentleman's face:—Good master Froth, look upon his honour; 'tis for a good purpose: Doth your honour mark his face?

Escal. Ay, sir, very well.

Clo. Nay, I beseech you, mark it well.

Escal. Well I do so.

Clo. Doth your honour see any harm in his face?

Escal. Why, no.

Clo. I'll be supposed[5] upon a book, his face is the worst thing about him: Good then; if his face be the worst thing about him, how could master Froth do the constable's wife any harm? I would know that of your honour.

Escal. He's in the right: Constable, what say you to it?

Elb. First, an it like you, the house is a respected house; next, this is a respected fellow; and his mistress is a respected woman.

Clo. By this hand, sir, his wife is a more respected person than any of us all.

Elb. Varlet, thou liest; thou liest, wicked varlet: the time is yet to come, that she was ever respected with man, woman, or child.

Clo. Sir, she was respected with him before he married with her.

Escal. Which is the wiser here? Justice, or Iniquity?[6] Is this true?

Elb. O thou caitiff! O thou varlet! O thou wicked

[5] Deposed, sworn. [6] Constable or clown.

Hannibal!? I respected with her, before I was married to her? If ever I was respected with her, or she with me, let not your worship think me the poor duke's officer :—Prove this, thou wicked Hannibal, or I'll have mine action of battery on thee.

Escal. If he took you a box o' ear, you might have your action of slander too.

Elb. Marry, I thank your good worship for it: What is't your worship's pleasure I should do with this wicked caitiff?

Escal. Truly, officer, because he hath some offences in him, that thou wouldst discover if thou couldst, let him continue in his courses, till thou know'st what they are.

Elb. Marry, I thank your worship for it :—Thou seest, thou wicked varlet now, what's come upon thee; thou art to continue now, thou varlet; thou art to continue.

Escal. Where were you born, friend?

[*To* FROTH.

Froth. Here in Vienna, sir.

Escal. Are you of fourscore pounds a year?

Froth. Yes, and't please you, sir.

Escal. So.—What trade are you of, sir?

[*To the* Clown

Clo. A tapster; a poor widow's tapster.

Escal. Your mistress's name?

Clo. Mistress Over-done.

Escal. Hath she had any more than one husband?

Clo. Nine, sir; Over-done by the last.

Escal. Nine!—Come hither to me, master Froth.

? For canibal.

Master Froth, I would not have you acquainted with tapsters; they will draw you, master Froth, and you will hang them: Get you gone, and let me hear no more of you.

Froth. I thank your worship: For mine own part, I never come into any room in a taphouse, but I am drawn in.

Escal. Well; no more of it, master Froth: farewell. [*Exit* FROTH.]—Come you hither to me, master tapster; what's your name, master tapster?

Clo. Pompey.

Escal. What else?

Clo. Bum, sir.

Escal. 'Troth, and your bum is the greatest thing about you; so that, in the beastliest sense, you are Pompey the great. Pompey, you are partly a bawd, Pompey, howsoever you colour it in being a tapster. Are you not? come, tell me true; it shall be the better for you.

Clo. Truly, sir, I am a poor fellow, that would live.

Escal. How would you live, Pompey? by being a bawd? What do you think of the trade, Pompey? is it a lawful trade?

Clo. If the law would allow it, sir.

Escal. But the law will not allow it, Pompey; nor it shall not be allowed in Vienna.

Clo. Does your worship mean to geld and spay all the youth in the city?

Escal. No, Pompey.

Clo. Truly, sir, in my poor opinion, they will to't

then: If your worship will take order[8] for the drabs and the knaves, you need not to fear the bawds.

Escal. There are pretty orders beginning, I can tell you: It is but heading and hanging.

Clo. If you head and hang all that offend that way but for ten year together, you'll be glad to give out a commission for more heads. If this law hold in Vienna ten year, I'll rent the fairest house in it, after three pence a bay: If you live to see this come to pass, say, Pompey told you so.

Escal. Thank you, good Pompey: and, in requital of your prophecy, hark you,—I advise you, let me not find you before me again upon any complaint whatsoever, no, not for dwelling where you do; if I do, Pompey, I shall beat you to your tent, and prove a shrewd Cæsar to you; in plain dealing, Pompey, I shall have you whipt: so for this time, Pompey, fare you well.

Clo. I thank your worship for your good counsel; but I shall follow it, as the flesh and fortune shall better determine.

Whip me? No, no; let carman whip his jade;
The valiant heart's not whipt out of his trade. [*Exit.*

Escal. Come hither to me, master Elbow; come hither, master Constable. How long have you been in this place of constable?

Elb. Seven year and a half, sir.

Escal. I thought, by your readiness in the office, you had continued in it some time: You say, seven years together?

[8] Measures.

Elb. And a half, sir.

Escal. Alas! it hath been great pains to you! They do you wrong to put you so oft upon't: Are there not men in your ward sufficient to serve it?

Elb. Faith, sir, few of any wit in such matters: as they are chosen, they are glad to choose me for them; I do it for some piece of money, and go through with all.

Escal. Look you, bring me in the names of some six or seven, the most sufficient of your parish.

Elb. To your worship's house, sir?

Escal. To my house: Fare you well. [*Exit.* ELBOW.] What's o'clock, think you?

Just. Eleven, sir.

Escal. I pray you home to dinner with me.

Just. I humbly thank you.

Escal. It grieves me for the death of Claudio; But there's no remedy.

Just. Lord Angelo is severe.

Escal. It is but needful:
Mercy is not itself, that oft looks so;
Pardon is still the nurse of second woe:
But yet,—Poor Claudio!—There's no remedy.
Come, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Another Room in the same.

Enter Provost *and a* Servant.

Serv. He's hearing of a cause; he will come straight.
I'll tell him of you.

Prov. Pray you, do. [*Exit* Servant.] I'll know
His pleasure; may be, he will relent: Alas,
He hath but as offended in a dream!
All sects, all ages smack of this vice; and he
To die for it!—

Enter ANGELO.

Ang. Now, what's the matter, provost?
Prov. Is it your will Claudio shall die to-morrow?
Ang. Did I not tell thee, yea? hadst thou not order?
Why dost thou ask again?
Prov. Lest I might be too rash:
Under your good correction, I have seen,
When, after execution, judgment hath
Repented o'er his doom.
Ang. Go to; let that be mine:
Do you your office, or give up your place,
And you shall well be spar'd.
Prov. I crave your honour's pardon.—
What shall be done, sir, with the groaning Juliet?
She's very near her hour.
Ang. Dispose of her
To some more fitter place; and that with speed.

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. Here is the sister of the man condemn'd,
Desires access to you.
Ang. Hath he a sister?
Prov. Ay, my good lord; a very virtuous maid,
And to be shortly of a sisterhood,
If not already.

Ang. Well, let her be admitted.

[*Exit* Servant.

See you, the fornicatress be remov'd;
Let her have needful, but not lavish, means;
There shall be order for it.

Enter LUCIO *and* ISABELLA.

Prov. Save your honour! [*Offering to retire.*

Ang. Stay a little while.—[*To* ISAB.] You are welcome: What's your will?

Isab. I am a woeful suitor to your honour,
Please but your honour hear me.

Ang. Well; what's your suit?

Isab. There is a vice, that most I do abhor,
And most desire should meet the blow of justice;
For which I would not plead, but that I must;
For which I must not plead, but that I am
At war, 'twixt will, and will not.

Ang. Well; the matter?

Isab. I have a brother is condemn'd to die:
I do beseech you, let it be his fault,
And not my brother.

Prov. Heaven give thee moving graces!

Ang. Condemn the fault, and not the actor of it!
Why, every fault's condemn'd, ere it be done:
Mine were the very cipher of a function,
To find the faults, whose fine stands in record,
And let go by the actor.

Isab. O just, but severe law!
I had a brother then.—Heaven keep your honour!

[*Retiring.*

Lucio. [*To* ISAB.] Give't not o'er so: to him again, intreat him;
Kneel down before him, hang upon his gown;
You are too cold: if you should need a pin,
You could not with more tame a tongue desire it:
To him, I say.

Isab. Must he needs die?

Ang. Maiden, no remedy.

Isab. Yes; I do think that you might pardon him,
And neither heaven, nor man, grieve at the mercy.

Ang. I will not do't.

Isab. But can you, if you would?

Ang. Look, what I will not, that I cannot do.

Isab. But might you do't, and do the world no wrong,
If so your heart were touch'd with that remorse[1]
As mine is to him?

Ang. He's sentenc'd; 'tis too late.

Lucio. You are too cold [*To* ISABELLA.

Isab. Too late? why, no; I, that do speak a word,
May call it back again: Well believe[2] this,
No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,
Not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword,
The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,
Become them with one half so good a grace,
As mercy does. If he had been as you,
And you as he, you would have slipt like him;
But he, like you, would not have been so stern.

Ang. Pray you, begone.

Isab. I would to heaven I had your potency,
And you were Isabel! should it then be thus?

[1] Pity. [2] Be assured.

No; I would tell what 'twere to be a judge,
And what a prisoner.

Lucio. Ay, touch him: there's the vein. [*Aside.*

Ang. Your brother is a forfeit of the law,
And you but waste your words.

Isab. Alas! alas!
Why, all the souls that were, were forfeit once;
And He that might the vantage best have took,
Found out the remedy: How would you be,
If he, which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are? O, think on that;
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
Like man new made.

Ang. Be you content, fair maid;
It is the law, not I, condemns your brother:
Were he my kinsman, brother, or my son,
It should be thus with him;—he must die to-morrow.

Isab. To-morrow? O, that's sudden! Spare him, spare him:
He's not prepar'd for death! Even for our kitchens
We kill the fowl of season;[3] shall we serve heaven
With less respect than we do minister
To our gross selves? Good, good my lord, bethink you:
Who is it that hath died for this offence?
There's many have committed it.

Lucio. Ay, well said.

Ang. The law hath not been dead, though it hath slept:
Those many had not dar'd to do that evil,
If the first man that did the edict infringe,

[3] When in season.

Had answer'd for his deed: now, 'tis awake;
Takes note of what is done; and, like a prophet,
Looks in a glass, that shows what future evils,
(Either now, or by remissness new-conceiv'd,
And so in progress to be hatch'd and born,)
Are now to have no successive degrees,
But, where they live, to end.

Isab. Yet show some pity

Ang. I show it most of all, when I show justice;
For then I pity those I do not know,
Which a dismiss'd offence would after gall;
And do him right, that, answering one foul wrong,
Lives not to act another. Be satisfied;
Your brother dies to-morrow; be content.

Isab. So you must be the first, that gives this sentence;
And he, that suffers: O, it is excellent
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant.

Lucio. That's well said.

Isab. Could great men thunder
As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet,
For every pelting,[4] petty officer,
Would use his heaven for thunder; nothing but thunder.——
Merciful heaven!
Thou rather, with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt,
Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled[5] oak,
Than the soft myrtle;—O, but man, proud man!
Drest in a little brief authority;

[4] Paltry. [5] Knotted.

Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd,
His glassy essence,—like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastick tricks before high heaven,
As make the angels weep; who, with our spleens,
Would all themselves laugh mortal.

Lucio. O, to him, to him, wench: he will relent;
He's coming, I perceive't.

Prov. Pray heaven, she win him!

Isab. We cannot weigh our brother with ourself:
Great men may jest with saints: 'tis wit in them;
But, in the less, foul profanation.

Lucio. Thou'rt in the right, girl; more o' that.

Isab. That in the captain's but a cholerick word,
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy.

Lucio. Art advis'd o' that? more on't.

Ang. Why do you put these sayings upon me?

Isab. Because authority, though it err like others,
Hath yet a kind of medicine in itself,
That skins the vice o' the top: Go to your bosom;
Knock there; and ask your heart, what it doth know
That's like my brother's fault: if it confess
A natural guiltiness, such as is his,
Let it not sound a thought upon your tongue
Against my brother's life.

Ang. She speaks, and 'tis
Such sense, that my sense breeds with it.——Fare you well.

Isab. Gentle my lord, turn back.

Ang. I will bethink me:—Come again to-morrow.

Isab. Hark, how I'll bribe you: Good my lord, turn back.

Ang. How! bribe me?

Isab. Ay, with such gifts, that heaven shall share with you.

Lucio. You had marr'd all else.

Isab. Not with fond shekels of the tested[6] gold,
Or stones, whose rates are either rich, or poor,
As fancy values them: but with true prayers,
That shall be up at heaven, and enter there,
Ere sun-rise; prayers from preserved[7] souls,
From fasting maids, whose minds are dedicate
To nothing temporal.

Ang. Well: come to me
To-morrow.

Lucio. Go to; it is well; away. [*Aside to* ISABEL.

Isab. Heaven keep your honour safe!

Ang. Amen: for I
Am that way going to temptation, [*Aside.*
Where prayers cross.

Isab. At what hour to-morrow
Shall I attend your lordship?

Ang. At any time 'fore noon.

Isab. Save your honour!

[*Exeunt* LUCIO, ISABELLA, *and* Provost.

Ang. From thee; even from thy virtue!—
What's this? what's this? Is this her fault, or mine?
The tempter, or the tempted, who sins most? Ha!
Not she; nor doth she tempt: but it is I,
That lying by the violet, in the sun,
Do, as the carrion does, not as the flower,
Corrupt with virtuous season. Can it be,
That modesty may more betray our sense

[6] Attested, stamped.
[7] Preserved from the corruption of the world.

Than woman's lightness? Having waste ground enough,
Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary,
And pitch our evils there?[8] O, fy, fy, fy!
What dost thou? or what art thou, Angelo?
Dost thou desire her foully, for those things
That make her good? O, let her brother live:
Thieves for their robbery have authority,
When judges steal themselves. What? do I love her,
That I desire to hear her speak again,
And feast upon her eyes? What is't I dream on?
O cunning enemy, that, to catch a saint,
With saints dost bait thy hook! Most dangerous
Is that temptation, that doth goad us on
To sin in loving virtue: never could the strumpet,
With all her double vigour, art, and nature,
Once stir my temper; but this virtuous maid
Subdues me quite;—Ever, till now,
When men were fond, I smil'd, and wonder'd how.
[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in a Prison.

Enter Duke, *habited like a Friar, and* Provost.

Duke. Hail to you, provost! so, I think you are.

Prov. I am the provost: What's your will, good friar?

Duke. Bound by my charity, and my bless'd order,
I come to visit the afflicted spirits

[8] See 2 Kings, x. 27.

Here in the prison: do me the common right
To let me see them; and to make me know
The nature of their crimes, that I may minister
To them accordingly.

Prov. I would do more than that, if more were needful.

Enter JULIET.

Look, here comes one; a gentlewoman of mine,
Who falling in the flames of her own youth,
Hath blister'd her report: She is with child;
And he that got it, sentenc'd: a young man
More fit to do another such offence,
Than die for this.

Duke. When must he die?

Prov. As I do think, to-morrow.—
I have provided for you; stay a while, [*To* JULIET.
And you shall be conducted.

Duke. Repent you, fair one, of the sin you carry?

Juliet. I do; and bear the shame most patiently.

Duke. I'll teach you how you shall arraign your conscience,
And try your penitence, if it be sound,
Or hollowly put on.

Juliet. I'll gladly learn.

Duke. Love you the man that wrong'd you?

Juliet. Yes, as I love the woman that wrong'd him.

Duke. So then, it seems, your most offenceful act
Was mutually committed?

Juliet. Mutually.

Duke. Then was your sin of heavier kind than his.

Juliet. I do confess it, and repent it, father.

Duke. 'Tis meet so, daughter: But lest you do repent,
As that the sin hath brought you to this shame,—
Which sorrow is always toward ourselves, not heaven;
Showing, we'd not spare[9] heaven, as we love it,
But as we stand in fear,—

Juliet. I do repent me, as it is an evil;
And take the shame with joy.

Duke. There rest.
Your partner, as I hear, must die to-morrow,
And I am going with instruction to him.—
Grace go with you! *Benedicite!* [*Exit.*

Juliet. Must die to-morrow! O, injurious love,
That respites me a life, whose very comfort
Is still a dying horror!

Prov. 'Tis pity of him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Room in Angelo's *House.*

Enter ANGELO.

Ang. When I would pray and think, I think and pray
To several subjects: heaven hath my empty words;
Whilst my invention, hearing not my tongue,
Anchors on Isabel: Heaven in my mouth,
As if I did but only chew his name;
And in my heart, the strong and swelling evil
Of my conception: The state, whereon I studied,
Is like a good thing, being often read,

[9] Spare to offend heaven.

Grown fear'd and tedious; yea, my gravity,
Wherein (let no man hear me) I take pride,
Could I, with boot,[1] change for an idle plume,
Which the air beats for vain. O place! O form!
How often dost thou with thy case,[2] thy habit,
Wrench awe from fools, and tie the wiser souls
To thy false seeming? Blood, thou still art blood:
Let's write good angel on the devil's horn,
'Tis not the devil's crest.

Enter Servant.

How now, who's there?

Serv. One Isabel, a sister,
Desires access to you.

Ang. Teach her the way. [*Exit* Serv.
O heavens!
Why does my blood thus muster to my heart;
Making both it unable for itself,
And dispossessing all the other parts
Of necessary fitness?
So play the foolish throngs with one that swoons;
Come all to help him, and so stop the air
By which he should revive: and even so
The general,[3] subject to a well-wish'd king,
Quit their own part, and in obsequious fondness
Croud to his presence, where their untaught love
Must needs appear offence.

Enter ISABELLA.

How now, fair maid?

Isab. I am come to know your pleasure.

[1] Profit. [2] Outside. [3] People.

Ang. That you might know it, would much better please me,
Than to demand what 'tis. Your brother cannot live.

Isab. Even so?—Heaven keep your honour! [*Retiring.*

Ang. Yet may he live a while; and, it may be,
As long as you, or I: Yet he must die.

Isab. Under your sentence?

Ang. Yea.

Isab. When, I beseech you? that in his reprieve,
Longer, or shorter, he may be so fitted,
That his soul sicken not.

Ang. Ha! Fye, these filthy vices! It were as good
To pardon him, that hath from nature stolen
A man already made, as to remit
Their sawcy sweetness, that do coin heaven's image,
In stamps that are forbid: 'tis all as easy
Falsely to take away a life true made,
As to put mettle in restrained means,
To make a false one.

Isab. 'Tis set down so in heaven, but not in earth.

Ang. Say you so? then I shall poze you quickly.
Which had you rather, That the most just law
Now took your brother's life; or, to redeem him,
Give up your body to such sweet uncleanness,
As she that he hath stain'd?

Isab. Sir, believe this,
I had rather give my body than my soul.

Ang. I talk not of your soul; Our compell'd sins
Stand more for number than accompt.

Isab. How say you?

Ang. Nay, I'll not warrant that; for I can speak

Against the thing I say. Answer to this;—
I, now the voice of the recorded law,
Pronounce a sentence on your brother's life:
Might there not be a charity in sin,
To save this brother's life?

Isab. Please you to do't,
I'll take it as a peril to my soul,
It is no sin at all, but charity.

Ang. Pleas'd you to do't, at peril of your soul,
Were equal poize of sin and charity.

Isab. That I do beg his life, if it be sin,
Heaven, let me bear it! you granting of my suit,
If that be sin, I'll make it my morn prayer
To have it added to the faults of mine,
And nothing of your, answer.

Ang. Nay, but hear me:
Your sense pursues not mine: either you are ignorant,
Or seem so, craftily; and that's not good.

Isab. Let me be ignorant, and in nothing good,
But graciously to know I am no better.

Ang. Thus wisdom wishes to appear most bright,
When it doth tax itself: as these black masks
Proclaim an enshield[4] beauty ten times louder
Than beauty could displayed.—But mark me;
To be received plain, I'll speak more gross:
Your brother is to die.

Isab. So.

Ang. And his offence is so, as it appears
Accountant to the law upon that pain.[5]

Isab. True.

Ang. Admit no other way to save his life,

[4] Enshielded, covered. [5] Penalty.

(As I subscribe[6] not that, nor any other,
But in the loss of question,)[7] that you, his sister,
Finding yourself desir'd of such a person,
Whose credit with the judge, or own great place,
Could fetch your brother from the manacles
Of the all-binding law; and that there were
No earthly mean to save him, but that either
You must lay down the treasures of your body
To this supposed, or else let him suffer;
What would you do?

Isab. As much for my poor brother, as myself:
That is, Were I under the terms of death,
The impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies,
And strip myself to death, as to a bed
That longing I have been sick for, ere I'd yield
My body up to shame.

Ang. Then must your brother die.

Isab. And 'twere the cheaper way:
Better it were, a brother died at once,
Than that a sister, by redeeming him,
Should die for ever.

Ang. Were not you then as cruel as the sentence
That you have slander'd so?

Isab. Ignomy[8] in ransom, and free pardon,
Are of two houses: lawful mercy is
Nothing akin to foul redemption.

Ang. You seem'd of late to make the law a tyrant;
And rather prov'd the sliding of your brother
A merriment than a vice.

Isab. O, pardon me, my lord; it oft falls out,
To have what we'd have, we speak not what we mean:

[6] Agree to. [7] Conversation. [8] Ignominy.

I something do excuse the thing I hate,
For his advantage that I dearly love.
Ang. We are all frail.
Isab. Else let my brother die,
If not a feodary,[9] but only he,
Owe,[1] and succeed by weakness.
Ang. Nay, women are frail too.
Isab. Ay, as the glasses where they view themselves;
Which are as easy broke as they make forms.
Women!—Help heaven! men their creation mar
In profiting by them. Nay, call us ten times frail;
For we are soft as our complexions are,
And credulous to false prints.[2]
Ang. I think it well:
And from this testimony of your own sex,
(Since, I suppose, we are made to be no stronger
Than faults may shake our frames,) let me be bold;—
I do arrest your words; Be that you are,
That is, a woman; if you be more, you're none;
If you be one, (as you are well express'd
By all external warrants,) show it now,
By putting on the destin'd livery.
Isab. I have no tongue but one: gentle my lord,
Let me intreat you speak the former language.
Ang. Plainly conceive, I love you.
Isab. My brother did love Juliet; and you tell me,
That he shall die for it.
Ang. He shall not, Isabel, if you give me love.
Isab. I know, your virtue hath a licence in't,
Which seems a little fouler than it is,

[9] Associate. [1] Own. [2] Impressions.

To pluck on others.

Ang. Believe me, on mine honour,
My words express my purpose.

Isab. Ha! little honour to be much believ'd,
And most pernicious purpose!—Seeming, seeming![3]—
I will proclaim thee, Angelo; look for't:
Sign me a present pardon for my brother,
Or, with an outstretch'd throat, I'll tell the world
Aloud, what man thou art.

Ang. Who will believe thee, Isabel?
My unsoil'd name, the austereness of my life,
My vouch[4] against you, and my place i'the state,
Will so your accusation overweigh,
That you shall stifle in your own report,
And smell of calumny. I have begun;
And now I give my sensual race the rein:
Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite;
Lay by all nicety, and prolixious[5] blushes,
That banish what they sue for; redeem thy brother
By yielding up thy body to my will;
Or else he must not only die the death,
But thy unkindness shall his death draw out
To lingering sufferance: answer me to-morrow,
Or, by the affection that now guides me most,
I'll prove a tyrant to him: As for you,
Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your true.

[*Exit.*

Isab. To whom shall I complain? Did I tell this,
Who would believe me? O perilous mouths,
That bear in them one and the self-same tongue,
Either of condemnation or approof!

[3] Hypocrisy. [4] Attestation. [5] Reluctant.

Bidding the law make court'sy to their will;
Hooking both right and wrong to the appetite,
To follow as it draws! I'll to my brother:
Though he hath fallen by prompture of the blood,
Yet hath he in him such a mind of honour,
That had he twenty heads to tender down
On twenty bloody blocks, he'd yield them up,
Before his sister should her body stoop
To such abhorr'd pollution.
Then Isabel, live chaste, and, brother, die:
More than our brother is our chastity.
I'll tell him yet of Angelo's request,
And fit his mind to death, for his soul's rest. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. A Room in the Prison.

Enter Duke, CLAUDIO, *and* Provost.

Duke. So, then you hope of pardon from lord Angelo?

Claud. The miserable have no other medicine,
But only hope:
I have hope to live, and am prepar'd to die.

Duke. Be absolute[6] for death; either death, or life,
Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason thus with life,—
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing
That none but fools would keep: a breath thou art,
(Servile to all the skiey influences,)
That dost this habitation, where thou keep'st,
Hourly afflict: merely, thou art death's fool;

[6] Determined.

For him thou labour'st by thy flight to shun,
And yet run'st toward him still: Thou art not noble;
For all the accommodations that thou bear'st,
Are nurs'd by baseness: Thou art by no means valiant;
For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork
Of a poor worm: Thy best of rest is sleep,
And that thou oft provok'st; yet grossly fear'st
Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thyself;
For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains
That issue out of dust: Happy thou art not:
For what thou hast not, still thou striv'st to get;
And what thou hast, forget'st: Thou art not certain;
For thy complexion shifts to strange effects,[7]
After the moon: If thou art rich, thou art poor;
For, like an ass, whose back with ingots bows,
Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,
And death unloads thee: Friend hast thou none;
For thine own bowels, which do call thee sire,
The mere effusion of thy proper loins,
Do curse the gout, serpigo,[8] and the rheum,
For ending thee no sooner: Thou hast nor youth, nor age;
But, as it were, an after-dinner's sleep,
Dreaming on both: for all thy blessed youth
Becomes as aged, and doth beg the alms
Of palsied eld;[9] and when thou art old, and rich,
Thou hast neither heat, affection, limb, nor beauty,
To make thy riches pleasant. What's yet in this,
That bears the name of life? Yet in this life
Lie hid more thousand deaths: yet death we fear,
That makes these odds all even.

[7] Affects, affections. [8] Leprous eruptions. [9] Old age.

Claud. I humbly thank you.
To sue to live, I find, I seek to die;
And, seeking death, find life: Let it come on.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. What, ho! Peace here; grace and good company!

Prov. Who's there? come in: the wish deserves a welcome.

Duke. Dear sir, ere long I'll visit you again.

Claud. Most holy sir, I thank you.

Isab. My business is a word or two with Claudio.

Prov. And very welcome. Look, signior, here's your sister.

Duke. Provost, a word with you.

Prov. As many as you please.

Duke. Bring them to speak, where I may be conceal'd,
Yet hear them. [*Exeunt* Duke *and* Provost.

Claud. Now, sister, what's the comfort?

Isab. Why, as all comforts are; most good in deed:
Lord Angelo, having affairs to heaven,
Intends you for his swift embassador,
Where you shall be an everlasting leiger:[1]
Therefore your best appointment[2] make with speed;
To-morrow you set on.

Claud. Is there no remedy?

Isab. None, but such remedy, as to save a head,
To cleave a heart in twain.

Claud. But is there any?

Isab. Yes, brother, you may live;

[1] Resident. [2] Preparation.

There is a devilish mercy in the judge,
If you'll implore it, that will free your life,
But fetter you till death.

Claud. Perpetual durance?

Isab. Ay, just, perpetual durance; a restraint,
Though all the world's vastidity[3] you had,
To a determin'd scope.

Claud. But in what nature?

Isab. In such a one as (you consenting to't)
Would bark your honour from that trunk you bear,
And leave you naked.

Claud. Let me know the point.

Isab. O, I do fear thee, Claudio; and I quake,
Lest thou a feverous life should'st entertain,
And six or seven winters more respect
Than a perpetual honour. Dar'st thou die?
The sense of death is most in apprehension;
And the poor beetle, that we tread upon,
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great
As when a giant dies.

Claud. Why give you me this shame?
Think you I can a resolution fetch
From flowery tenderness? If I must die,
I will encounter darkness as a bride,
And hug it in mine arms.

Isab. There spake my brother; there my father's grave
Did utter forth a voice! Yes, thou must die:
Thou art too noble to conserve a life
In base appliances. This outward-sainted deputy,—
Whose settled visage and deliberate word

[3] Vastness of extent.

Nips youth i'the head, and follies doth enmew,[4]
As falcon doth the fowl,—is yet a devil;
His filth within being cast, he would appear
A pond as deep as hell.

Claud. The princely Angelo?

Isab. O, 'tis the cunning livery of hell,
The damned'st body to invest and cover
In princely guards![5] Dost thou think, Claudio,
If I would yield him my virginity,
Thou might'st be freed?

Claud. O, heavens! it cannot be.

Isab. Yes, he would give it thee, from this rank offence,
So to offend him still: This night's the time
That I should do what I abhor to name,
Or else thou diest to-morrow.

Claud. Thou shalt not do't.

Isab. O, were it but my life,
I'd throw it down for your deliverance
As frankly[6] as a pin.

Claud. Thanks, dear Isabel.

Isab. Be ready, Claudio, for your death to-morrow.

Claud. Yes.—Has he affections in him,
That thus can make him bite the law by the nose,
When he would force it? Sure it is no sin;
Or of the deadly seven it is the least.

Isab. Which is the least?

Claud. If it were damnable, he, being so wise,
Why, would he for the momentary trick
Be perdurably[7] fin'd?—O Isabel!

Isab. What says my brother?

[4] Shut up. [5] Laced robes. [6] Freely. [7] Lastingly.

Claud. Death is a fearful thing.
Isab. And shamed life a hateful.
Claud. Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;
To be imprison'd in the viewless[8] winds,
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world; or to be worse than worst
Of those, that lawless and incertain thoughts
Imagine howling!—'tis too horrible!
The weariest and most loathed worldly life,
That age, ach, penury, and imprisonment
Can lay on nature, is a paradise
To what we fear of death.
Isab. Alas! alas!
Claud. Sweet sister, let me live:
What sin you do to save a brother's life,
Nature dispenses with the deed so far,
That it becomes a virtue.
Isab. O, you beast!
O, faithless coward! O, dishonest wretch!
Wilt thou be made a man out of my vice?
Is't not a kind of incest, to take life
From thine own sister's shame? What should I think?
Heaven shield, my mother play'd my father fair!
For such a warped slip of wilderness[9]
Ne'er issu'd from his blood. Take my defiance:[1]
Die; perish! might but my bending down

[8] Invisible. [9] Wildness. [1] Refusal.

Reprieve thee from thy fate, it should proceed:
I'll pray a thousand prayers for thy death,
No word to save thee.

Claud. Nay, Hear me, Isabel.

Isab. O, fye, fye, fye!
Thy sin's not accidental, but a trade:[2]
Mercy to thee would prove itself a bawd:
'Tis best that thou diest quickly. [*Going.*

Claud. O hear me, Isabella.

Re-enter Duke.

Duke. Vouchsafe a word, young sister, but one word

Isab. What is your will?

Duke. Might you dispense with your leisure, I would by and by have some speech with you: the satisfaction I would require, is likewise your own benefit.

Isab. I have no superfluous leisure; my stay must be stolen out of other affairs; but I will attend you a while.

Duke. [*To* CLAUDIO, *aside.*] Son, I have overheard what hath past between you and your sister. Angelo had never the purpose to corrupt her; only he hath made an essay of her virtue, to practise his judgment with the disposition of natures: she, having the truth of honour in her, hath made him that gracious denial which he is most glad to receive: I am confessor to Angelo, and I know this to be true; therefore prepare yourself to death: Do not satisfy your resolution with hopes that are fallible: to-

[2] An established habit.

morrow you must die; go to your knees, and make ready.

Claud. Let me ask my sister pardon. I am so out of love with life, that I will sue to be rid of it.

Duke. Hold [3] you there: Farewell.

[*Exit* CLAUDIO.

Re-enter Provost.

Provost, a word with you.

Prov. What's your will, father?

Duke. That now you are come, you will be gone: Leave me a while with the maid; my mind promises with my habit, no loss shall touch her by my company.

Prov. In good time. [*Exit* Provost.

Duke. The hand that hath made you fair, hath made you good: the goodness, that is cheap in beauty, makes beauty brief in goodness; but grace, being the soul of your complexion, should keep the body of it ever fair. The assault, that Angelo hath made to you, fortune hath convey'd to my understanding; and, but that frailty hath examples for his falling, I should wonder at Angelo. How would you do to content this substitute, and to save your brother.

Isab. I am now going to resolve him: I had rather my brother die by the law, than my son should be unlawfully born. But O, how much is the good duke deceived in Angelo! If ever he return, and I can speak to him, I will open my lips in vain, or discover his government.

[3] Continue in that resolution.

Duke. That shall not be much amiss: Yet, as the matter now stands, he will avoid your accusation; he made trial of you only.—Therefore, fasten your ear on my advisings; to the love I have in doing good, a remedy presents itself. I do make myself believe, that you may most uprighteously do a poor wronged lady a merited benefit; redeem your brother from the angry law; do no stain to your own gracious person; and much please the absent duke, if, peradventure, he shall ever return to have hearing of this business.

Isab. Let me hear you speak further; I have spirit to do any thing that appears not foul in the truth of my spirit.

Duke. Virtue is bold, and goodness never fearful. Have you not heard speak of Mariana the sister of Frederick, the great soldier, who miscarried at sea?

Isab. I have heard of the lady, and good words went with her name.

Duke. Her should this Angelo have married; was affianced to her by oath, and the nuptial appointed: between which time of the contract, and limit of the solemnity, her brother Frederick was wrecked at sea, having in that perish'd vessel the dowry of his sister. But mark, how heavily this befel to the poor gentlewoman: there she lost a noble and renowned brother, in his love toward her ever most kind and natural; with him the portion and sinew of her fortune, her marriage-dowry; with both, her combinate[4] husband, this well seeming Angelo.

Isab. Can this be so? Did Angelo so leave her?

[4] Betrothed.

Duke. Left her in her tears, and dry'd not one of them with his comfort; swallowed his vows whole, pretending, in her, discoveries of dishonour: in few, bestowed[5] her on her own lamentation, which she yet wears for his sake; and he, a marble to her tears, is washed with them, but relents not.

Isab. What a merit were it in death, to take this poor maid from the world! What corruption in this life, that it will let this man live!—But how out of this can she avail?

Duke. It is a rupture that you may easily heal: and the cure of it not only saves your brother, but keeps you from dishonour in doing it.

Isab. Show me how, good father.

Duke. This fore-named maid hath yet in her the continuance of her first affection; his unjust unkindness, that in all reason should have quenched her love, hath, like an impediment in the current, made it more violent and unruly. Go you to Angelo; answer his requiring with a plausible obedience; agree with his demands to the point: only refer[6] yourself to this advantage,—first, that your stay with him may not be long; that the time may have all shadow and silence in it; and the place answer to convenience: this being granted in course, now follows all. We shall advise this wronged maid to stead up your appointment, go in your place; if the encounter acknowledge itself hereafter, it may compel him to her recompense: and here, by this, is your brother saved, your honour untainted, the poor Mari-

[5] Gave her up to her sorrows.

[6] Have recourse to.

ana advantaged, and the corrupt deputy scaled.[7] The maid will I frame, and make fit for his attempt. If you think well to carry this as you may, the doubleness of the benefit defends the deceit from reproof. What think you of it?

Isab. The image of it gives me content already; and, I trust, it will grow to a most prosperous perfection.

Duke. It lies much in your holding up: Haste you speedily to Angelo; if for this night he entreat you to his bed, give him promise of satisfaction. I will presently to St. Luke's; there, at the moated grange,[8] resides this dejected Mariana: At that place call upon me; and despatch with Angelo, that it may be quickly.

Isab. I thank you for this comfort: Fare you well, good father. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

The Street before the Prison.

Enter Duke, *as a Friar; to him* ELBOW, Clown, *and* Officers.

Elb. Nay, if there be no remedy for it, but that you will needs buy and sell men and women like beasts, we shall have all the world drink brown and white bastard.[9]

Duke. O, heavens! what stuff is here?

Clo. 'Twas never merry world, since, of two usuries,

[7] Over-reached. [8] A Solitary farm-house.
[9] A Sweet wine.

the merriest was put down, and the worser allow'd by order of law a furr'd gown to keep him warm; and furr'd with fox and lamb-skins too, to signify, that craft, being richer than innocency, stands for the facing.

Elb. Come your way, sir:—Bless you, good father friar.

Duke. And you, good brother father: What offence hath this man made you, sir?

Elb. Marry, sir, he hath offended the law; and, sir, we take him to be a thief too, sir; for we have found upon him, sir, a strange pick-lock,[1] which we have sent to the deputy.

Duke. Fye, sirrah; a bawd, a wicked bawd!
The evil that thou causest to be done,
That is thy means to live: Do thou but think
What 'tis to cram a maw, or clothe a back,
From such a filthy vice: say to thyself,—
From their abominable and beastly touches
I drink, I eat, array myself, and live.
Canst thou believe thy living is a life,
So stinkingly depending? Go, mend, go, mend.

Clo. Indeed, it does stink in some sort, sir; but yet, sir, I would prove——

Duke. Nay, if the devil have given thee proofs for sin,
Thou wilt prove his. Take him to prison, officer;
Correction and instruction must both work,
Ere this rude beast will profit.

Elb. He must before the deputy, sir; he has given him warning: the deputy cannot abide a whore-

[1] For a Spanish padlock.

master: if he be a whoremonger, and comes before him, he were as good go a mile on his errand.

Duke. That we were all, as some would seem to be, Free from our faults, as faults from seeming, free!

Enter LUCIO.

Elb. His neck will come to your waist, a cord,[2] sir.

Clo. I spy comfort; I cry, bail: Here's a gentleman, and a friend of mine.

Lucio. How now, noble Pompey? What, at the heels of Cæsar? Art thou led in triumph? What, is there none of Pygmalion's images, newly made woman, to be had now, for putting the hand in the pocket and extracting it clutch'd? What reply? Ha? What say'st thou to this tune, matter, and method? Is't not drown'd i' the last rain? Ha? What say'st thou, trot? Is the world as it was, man? Which is the way? Is it sad, and few words? Or how? The trick of it?

Duke. Still thus, and thus! still worse!

Lucio. How doth my dear morsel, thy mistress? Procures she still? Ha?

Clo. Troth, sir, she hath eaten up all her beef, and she is herself in the tub.[3]

Lucio. Why, 'tis good; it is the right of it; it must be so: Ever your fresh whore, and your powder'd bawd: An unshunn'd consequence; it must be so: Art going to prison, Pompey!

Clo. Yes, faith, sir.

Lucio. Why 'tis not amiss, Pompey: Farewell:

[2] Tied like your waist with a rope.

[3] Powdering tub.

Go; say, I sent thee thither. For debt, Pompey? Or how?

Elb. For being a bawd, for being a bawd.

Lucio. Well, then imprison him: If imprisonment be the due of a bawd, why, 'tis his right: Bawd is he, doubtless, and of antiquity too; bawd-born. Farewell, good Pompey: Commend me to the prison, Pompey: You will turn good husband now, Pompey; you will keep the house.[4]

Clo. I hope, sir, your good worship will be my bail.

Lucio. No, indeed, will I not, Pompey; it is not the wear.[5] I will pray, Pompey, to increase your bondage: if you take it not patiently, why, your mettle is the more: Adieu, trusty Pompey.—Bless you, friar.

Duke. And you.

Lucio. Does Bridget paint still, Pompey? Ha?

Elb. Come your ways, sir; come.

Clo. You will not bail me then, sir?

Lucio. Then, Pompey? nor now.—What news abroad, friar? What news?

Elb. Come your ways, sir; come.

Lucio. Go,—to kennel, Pompey, go:

[*Exeunt* ELBOW, Clown, *and* Officers.

What news, friar, of the duke?

Duke. I know none: Can you tell me of any?

Lucio. Some say, he is with the emperor of Russia; other some, he is in Rome: But where is he, think you?

Duke. I know not where: But wheresoever, I wish him well.

[4] Stay at home. [5] Fashion.

Lucio. It was a mad fantastical trick of him, to steal from the state, and usurp the beggary he was never born to. Lord Angelo dukes it well in his absence; he puts transgression to't.

Duke. He does well in't.

Lucio. A little more lenity to lechery would do no harm in him: something too crabbed that way, friar.

Duke. It is too general a vice, and severity must cure it.

Lucio. Yes, in good sooth, the vice is of a great kindred; it is well ally'd: but it is impossible to extirp it quite, friar, till eating and drinking be put down. They say, this Angelo was not made by man and woman, after the downright way of creation: Is it true, think you?

Duke. How should he be made then?

Lucio. Some report, a sea-maid spawn'd him:—Some, that he was begot between two stock-fishes:—But it is certain, that when he makes water, his urin is congeal'd ice; that I know to be true; and he is a motion[6] ungenerative, that's infallible.

Duke. You are pleasant, sir; and speak apace.

Lucio. Why, what a ruthless thing is this in him, for the rebellion of a cod-piece, to take away the life of a man? Would the duke, that is absent, have done this? Ere he would have hang'd a man for the getting a hundred bastards, he would have paid for the nursing a thousand: He had some feeling of the sport; he knew the service, and that instructed him to mercy.

Duke. I never heard the absent duke much detected[7] for women; he was not inclined that way.

6 Puppet. 7 Suspected.

Lucio. O, sir, you are deceived.

Duke. 'Tis not possible.

Lucio. Who? not the duke? yes, your beggar of fifty;—and his use was, to put a ducat in her clack-dish: the duke had crotchets in him: He would be drunk too; that let me inform you.

Duke. You do him wrong, surely.

Lucio. Sir, I was an inward of his: A shy fellow was the duke: and, I believe, I know the cause of his withdrawing.

Duke. What, I pr'ythee, might be the cause?

Lucio. No,—pardon;—'tis a secret must be lock'd within the teeth and the lips: but this I can let you understand,—The greater file[8] of the subject held the duke to be wise.

Duke. Wise? why, no question but he was.

Lucio. A very superficial, ignorant, unweighing[9] fellow.

Duke. Either this is envy in you, folly, or mistaking; the very stream of his life, and the business he hath helmed,[1] must, upon a warranted need, give him a better proclamation. Let him be but testimonied in his own bringings forth, and he shall appear to the envious, a scholar, a statesman, and a soldier: Therefore, you speak unskilfully; or, if your knowledge be more, it is much darken'd in your malice.

Lucio. Sir, I know him, and I love him.

Duke. Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love.

[8] The majority of his subjects.

[9] Inconsiderate.

[1] Guided.

Lucio. Come, sir, I know what I know.

Duke. I can hardly believe that, since you know not what you speak. But, if ever the duke return, (as our prayers are he may,) let me desire you to make your answer before him: If it be honest you have spoke, you have courage to maintain it: I am bound to call upon you; and, I pray you, your name?

Lucio. Sir, my name is Lucio; well known to the duke.

Duke. He shall know you better, sir, if I may live to report you.

Lucio. I fear you not.

Duke. O, you hope the duke will return no more; or you imagine me too unhurtful an opposite.[2] But, indeed, I can do you little harm: you'll forswear this again.

Lucio. I'll be hang'd first: thou art deceived in me, friar. But no more of this: Canst thou tell, if Claudio die to-morrow, or no?

Duke. Why should he die, sir?

Lucio. Why? for filling a bottle with a tun-dish. I would, the duke, we talk of, were return'd again: this ungenitur'd agent will unpeople the province with continency; sparrows must not build in his house-eaves, because they are lecherous. The duke yet would have dark deeds darkly answer'd; he would never bring them to light: would he were return'd! Marry, this Claudio is condemn'd for untrussing. Farewell, good friar; I pr'ythee, pray for me. The duke, I say to thee again, would eat mutton[3] on Fridays. He's now past it; yet, and

[2] Opponent. [3] Have a wench.

I say to thee, he would mouth with a beggar, though she smelt brown bread and garlick: say, that I said so. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Duke. No might nor greatness in mortality
Can censure 'scape; back-wounding calumny
The whitest virtue strikes: What king so strong,
Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue?
But who comes here?

Enter ESCALUS, Provost, Bawd, *and* Officers.

Escal. Go, away with her to prison.

Bawd. Good my lord, be good to me; your honour is accounted a merciful man: good my lord.

Escal. Double and treble admonition, and still forfeit[4] in the same kind? This would make mercy swear, and play the tyrant.

Prov. A bawd of eleven years continuance, may it please your honour.

Bawd. My lord, this is one Lucio's information against me: mistress Kate Keep-down was with child by him in the duke's time, he promised her marriage; his child is a year and a quarter old, come Philip and Jacob: I have kept it myself; and see how he goes about to abuse me.

Escal. That fellow is a fellow of much licence:—let him be called before us.—Away with her to prison: Go to; no more words. [*Exeunt* Bawd *and* Officers.] Provost, my brother Angelo will not be alter'd, Claudio must die to-morrow: let him be furnished with divines, and have all charitable pre-

[4] Transgress.

paration: if my brother wrought by my pity, it should not be so with him.

Prov. So please you, this friar hath been with him, and advised him for the entertainment of death.

Escal. Good even, good father.

Duke. Bliss and goodness on you!

Escal. Of whence are you?

Duke. Not of this country, though my chance is now
To use it for my time: I am a brother
Of gracious order, late come from the see,
In special business from his holiness.

Escal. What news abroad i' the world?

Duke. None, but that there is so great a fever on goodness, that the dissolution of it must cure it: novelty is only in request; and it is as dangerous to be aged in any kind of course, as it is virtuous to be constant in any undertaking. There is scarce truth enough alive, to make societies secure; but security enough, to make fellowships accurs'd: much upon this riddle runs the wisdom of the world. This news is old enough, yet it is every day's news. I pray you, sir, of what disposition was the duke?

Escal. One, that, above all other strifes, contended especially to know himself.

Duke. What pleasure was he given to?

Escal. Rather rejoicing to see another merry, than merry at any thing which profess'd to make him rejoice: a gentleman of all temperance. But leave we him to his events, with a prayer they may prove prosperous; and let me desire to know how you find Claudio prepared. I am made to understand, that you have lent him visitation.

Duke. He professes to have received no sinister measure from his judge, but most willingly humbles himself to the determination of justice: yet had he framed to himself, by the instruction of his frailty, many deceiving promises of life; which I, by my good leisure, have discredited to him, and now is he resolved[5] to die.

Escal. You have paid the heavens your function, and the prisoner the very debt of your calling. I have labour'd for the poor gentleman, to the extremest shore of my modesty; but my brother justice have I found so severe, that he hath forced me to tell him, he is indeed—justice.

Duke. If his own life answer the straitness of his proceeding, it shall become him well; wherein, if he chance to fail, he hath sentenced himself.

Escal. I am going to visit the prisoner: Fare you well.

Duke. Peace be with you!

[*Exeunt* ESCALUS *and* Provost.

He, who the sword of heaven will bear,
Should be as holy as severe;
Pattern in himself to know,
Grace to stand, and virtue go;
More nor less to others paying,
Than by self-offences weighing,
Shame to him, whose cruel striking
Kills for faults of his own liking!
Twice treble shame on Angelo,
To weed my vice, and let his grow!

[5] Satisfied.

O, what may man within him hide,
Though angel on the outward side!
How may likeness,[6] made[7] in crimes,
Making practice on the times,
Draw with idle spiders' strings
Most pond'rous and substantial things!
Craft against vice I must apply:
With Angelo to-night shall lie
His old betrothed, but despis'd;
So disguise shall, by the disguis'd,
Pay with falshood false exacting,
And perform an old contracting. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. A Room in Mariana's *House.*

MARIANA *discovered sitting; a Boy singing.*

SONG.

Take, oh take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn:
But my kisses bring again,
bring again,
Seals of love, but seal'd in vain,
seal'd in vain.

Mari. Break off thy song, and haste thee quick away;

[6] Appearance. [7] Trained.

Here comes a man of comfort, whose advice
Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.—
[*Exit* Boy.

Enter Duke.

I cry you mercy, sir; and well could wish
You had not found me here so musical:
Let me excuse me, and believe me so,—
My mirth it much displeas'd, but pleas'd my woe.

Duke. 'Tis good: though musick oft hath such a charm,
To make bad, good, and good provoke to harm.
I pray you, tell me, hath any body inquired for me here to-day? much upon this time have I promis'd here to meet.

Mari. You have not been inquired after: I have sat here all day.

Enter ISABELLA.

Duke. I do constantly believe you:—The time is come, even now. I shall crave your forbearance a little; may be, I will call upon you anon, for some advantage to yourself.

Mari. I am always bound to you. [*Exit.*

Duke. Very well met, and welcome.
What is the news from this good deputy?

Isab. He hath a garden circummur'd[8] with brick,
Whose western side is with a vineyard back'd;
And to that vineyard is a planched[9] gate;
That makes his opening with this bigger key:
This other doth command a little door,

[8] Walled round. [9] Planked, wooden.

Which from the vineyard to the garden leads;
There have I made my promise to call on him,
Upon the heavy middle of the night.

Duke. But shall you on your knowledge find this way?

Isab. I have ta'en a due and wary note upon't;
With whispering and most guilty diligence,
In action all of precept, he did show me
The way twice o'er.

Duke. Are there no other tokens
Between you 'greed, concerning her observance?

Isab. No, none, but only a repair i' the dark;
And that I have possess'd[1] him, my most stay
Can be but brief: for I have made him know,
I have a servant comes with me along,
That stays[2] upon me; whose persuasion is,
I come about my brother.

Duke. 'Tis well borne up.
I have not yet made known to Mariana
A word of this:—What, ho! within! come forth!

Re-enter MARIANA.

I pray you, be acquainted with this maid;
She comes to do you good.

Isab. I do desire the like.

Duke. Do you persuade yourself that I respect you?

Mari. Good friar, I know you do; and have found it.

Duke. Take then this your companion by the hand,
Who hath a story ready for your ear:
I shall attend your leisure; but make haste;

[1] Informed. [2] Waits.

The vaporous night approaches.

Mari. Will't please you walk aside?

[*Exeunt* MARIANA *and* ISABELLA.

Duke. O place and greatness, millions of false eyes
Are stuck upon thee! volumes of report
Run with these false and most contrarious quests[3]
Upon thy doings! thousand 'scapes[4] of wit
Make thee the father of their idle dream,
And rack thee in their fancies!—Welcome! How agreed?

Re-enter MARIANA *and* ISABELLA.

Isab. She'll take the enterprize upon her, father,
If you advise it.

Duke. It is not my consent,
But my intreaty too.

Isab. Little have you to say,
When you depart from him, but, soft and low,
Remember now my brother.

Mari. Fear me not.

Duke. Nor, gentle daughter, fear you not at all:
He is your husband on a pre-contract:
To bring you thus together, 'tis no sin;
Sith[5] that the justice of your title to him
Doth flourish[6] the deceit. Come, let us go;
Our corn's to reap, for yet our tithe's[7] to sow.

[*Exeunt.*

[3] Inquisitions, inquiries. [4] Sallies. [5] Since.
[6] Gild, or varnish over. [7] Tilth, land prepared for sowing.

SCENE II.

A Room in the Prison.

Enter Provost *and* Clown

Prov. Come hither, sirrah: Can you cut off a man's head?

Clo. If the man be a bachelor, sir, I can: but if he be a married man, he is his wife's head, and I can never cut off a woman's head.

Prov. Come, sir, leave me your snatches, and yield me a direct answer. To-morrow morning are to die Claudio and Barnardine: Here is in our prison a common executioner, who in his office lacks a helper: if you will take it on you to assist him, it shall redeem you from your gyves;[8] if not, you shall have your full time of imprisonment, and your deliverance with an unpitied whipping; for you have been a notorious bawd.

Clo. Sir, I have been an unlawful bawd, time out of mind; but yet I will be content to be a lawful hangman. I would be glad to receive some instruction from my fellow partner.

Prov. What ho, Abhorson! Where's Abhorson, there?

Enter ABHORSON.

Abhor. Do you call, sir?

Prov. Sirrah, here's a fellow will help you to-morrow in your execution: If you think it meet, com-

[8] Fetters.

pound with him by the year, and let him abide here with you; if not, use him for the present, and dismiss him: He cannot plead his estimation with you; he hath been a bawd.

Abhor. A bawd, sir? Fye upon him, he will discredit our mystery.[9]

Prov. Go to, sir; you weigh equally; a feather will turn the scale. [*Exit.*

Clo. Pray, sir, by your good favour, (for, surely, sir, a good favour[1] you have, but that you have a hanging look,) do you call, sir, your occupation a mystery?

Abhor. Ay, sir; a mystery.

Clo. Painting, sir, I have heard say, is a mystery; and your whores, sir, being members of my occupation, using painting, do prove my occupation a mystery: but what mystery there should be in hanging, if I should be hang'd, I cannot imagine.

Abhor. Sir, it is a mystery.

Clo. Proof.

Abhor. Every true[2] man's apparel fits your thief: If it be too little for your thief, your true man thinks it big enough; if it be too big for your thief, your thief thinks it little enough: so every true man's apparel fits your thief.

Re-enter Provost.

Prov. Are you agreed?

Clo. Sir, I will serve him; for I do find, your hangman is a more penitent trade than your bawd; he doth oftener ask forgiveness.

[9] Trade. [1] Countenance. [2] Honest.

Prov. You, sirrah, provide your block and your axe, to-morrow four o'clock.

Abhor. Come on, bawd; I will instruct thee in my trade; follow.

Clo. I do desire to learn, sir; and, I hope, if you have occasion to use me for your own turn, you shall find me yare:[3] for, truly sir, for your kindness, I owe you a good turn.

Prov. Call hither Barnardine and Claudio:

[*Exeunt* Clown *and* ABHORSON.

One has my pity; not a jot the other,
Being a murderer, though he were my brother.

Enter CLAUDIO.

Look, here's the warrant, Claudio, for thy death:
'Tis now dead midnight, and by eight to-morrow
Thou must be made immortal. Where's Barnardine?

Claud. As fast lock'd up in sleep, as guiltless labour
When it lies starkly[4] in the traveller's bones:
He will not wake.

Prov. Who can do good on him?
Well, go, prepare yourself. But hark, what noise?

[*Knocking within.*

Heaven give your spirits comfort! [*Exit* CLAUDIO.
By and by:—
I hope it is some pardon, or reprieve,
For the most gentle Claudio.—Welcome, father.

Enter Duke.

Duke. The best and wholesomest spirits of the night
Envelope you, good Provost! Who call'd here of late?

[3] Ready. [4] Stiffly.

Prov. None, since the curfew rung.
Duke. Not Isabel?
Prov. No.
Duke. They will then, ere't be long.
Prov. What comfort is for Claudio?
Duke. There's some in hope.
Prov. It is a bitter deputy.
Duke. Not so, not so; his life is parallel'd
Even with the stroke and line of his great justice;
He doth with holy abstinence subdue
That in himself, which he spurs on his power
To qualify[5] in others: were he meal'd[6]
With that which he corrects, then were he tyrannous;
But this being so, he's just.—Now are they come.—
[*Knocking within.*—Provost *goes out.*
This is a gentle provost: Seldom, when
The steeled gaoler is the friend of men.—
How now? What noise? That spirit's possess'd with haste,
That wounds the unsisting postern with these strokes.

Provost *returns, speaking to one at the door.*

Prov. There he must stay, until the officer
Arise to let him in; he is call'd up.
Duke. Have you no countermand for Claudio yet,
But he must die to-morrow?
Prov. None, sir, none.
Duke. As near the dawning, Provost, as it is,
You shall hear more ere morning.
Prov. Happily,[7]

[5] Moderate. [6] Defiled. [7] Perhaps.

You something know; yet, I believe, there comes
No countermand; no such example have we:
Besides, upon the very siege[8] of justice,
Lord Angelo hath to the publick ear
Profess'd the contrary.

Enter a Messenger.

Duke. This is his lordship's man.

Prov. And here comes Claudio's pardon.

Mess. My lord hath sent you this note; and by me this further charge, that you swerve not from the smallest article of it, neither in time, matter, or other circumstance. Good morrow; for, as I take it, it is almost day.

Prov. I shall obey him. [*Exit* Messenger.

Duke. This is his pardon; purchas'd by such sin, [*Aside.*
For which the pardoner himself is in:
Hence hath offence his quick celerity,
When it is borne in high authority:
When vice makes mercy, mercy's so extended,
That for the fault's love, is the offender friended.—
Now, sir, what news?

Prov. I told you: Lord Angelo, be-like, thinking me remiss in mine office, awakens me with this unwonted putting on:[9] methinks, strangely; for he hath not used it before.

Duke. Pray you, let's hear.

Prov. [Reads.] *Whatsoever you may hear to the contrary, let Claudio be executed by four of the clock; and, in the afternoon, Barnardine: for my better satis-*

[8] Seat. [9] Spur, incitement.

faction, let me have Claudio's head sent me by five. Let this be duly perform'd; with a thought, that more depends on it than we must yet deliver. Thus fail not to do your office, as you will answer it at your peril.
What say you to this, sir?

Duke. What is that Barnardine, who is to be executed in the afternoon?

Prov. A Bohemian born; but here nursed up and bred: one that is a prisoner nine years old.[1]

Duke. How came it, that the absent duke had not either deliver'd him to his liberty, or executed him? I have heard, it was ever his manner to do so.

Prov. His friends still wrought reprieves for him: And, indeed, his fact, till now in the government of lord Angelo, came not to an undoubtful proof.

Duke. Is it now apparent?

Prov. Most manifest, and not denied by himself.

Duke. Hath he borne himself penitently in prison? How seems he to be touch'd?

Prov. A man that apprehends death no more dreadfully, but as a drunken sleep; careless, reckless, and fearless of what's past, present, or to come; insensible of mortality, and desperately mortal.

Duke. He wants advice.

Prov. He will hear none: he hath evermore had the liberty of the prison; give him leave to escape hence, he would not: drunk many times a day, if not many days entirely drunk. We have very often awaked him, as if to carry him to execution, and show'd him a seeming warrant for it: it hath not moved him at all.

[1] Nine years in prison;

Duke. More of him anon. There is written in your brow, Provost, honesty and constancy: if I read it not truly, my ancient skill beguiles me; but in the boldness of my cunning, I will lay myself in hazard. Claudio, whom here you have a warrant to execute, is no greater forfeit to the law than Angelo who hath sentenced him: To make you understand this in a manifested effect, I crave but four days respite; for the which you are to do me both a present and a dangerous courtesy.

Prov. Pray, sir, in what?

Duke. In the delaying death.

Prov. Alack! how may I do it? having the hour limited, and an express command, under penalty, to deliver his head in the view of Angelo? I may make my case as Claudio's, to cross this in the smallest.

Duke. By the vow of mine order, I warrant you, if my instructions may be your guide. Let this Barnardine be this morning executed, and his head borne to Angelo.

Prov. Angelo hath seen them both, and will discover the favour.[2]

Duke. O, death's a great disguiser: and you may add to it. Shave the head, and tie the beard; and say, it was the desire of the penitent to be so bared before his death: You know, the course is common. If any thing fall to you upon this, more than thanks and good fortune, by the saint whom I profess, I will plead against it with my life.

Prov. Pardon me, good father; it is against my oath.

[2] Countenance.

Duke. Were you sworn to the duke, or to the deputy?

Prov. To him, and to his substitutes.

Duke. You will think you have made no offence, if the duke avouch the justice of your dealing?

Prov. But what likelihood is in that?

Duke. Not a resemblance, but a certainty. Yet since I see you fearful, that neither my coat, integrity, nor my persuasion, can with ease attempt you, I will go further than I meant, to pluck all fears out of you. Look you, sir, here is the hand and seal of the duke. You know the character, I doubt not; and the signet is not strange to you.

Prov. I know them both.

Duke. The contents of this is the return of the duke; you shall anon over-read it at your pleasure; where you shall find, within these two days he will be here. This is a thing, that Angelo knows not: for he this very day receives letters of strange tenor; perchance, of the duke's death; perchance, entering into some monastery; but, by chance, nothing of what is writ. Look, the unfolding star calls up the shepherd: Put not yourself into amazement, how these things should be: all difficulties are but easy when they are known. Call your executioner, and off with Barnardine's head: I will give him a present shrift, and advise him for a better place. Yet you are amazed; but this shall absolutely resolve you. Come away; it is almost clear dawn. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Another Room in the same.

Enter Clown.

Clo. I am as well acquainted here, as I was in our house of profession: one would think, it were mistress Overdone's own house, for here be many of her old customers. First, here's young master Rash; he's in for a commodity of brown paper and old ginger, ninescore and seventeen pounds; of which he made five marks, ready money: marry, then, ginger was not much in request, for the old women were all dead. Then is there here one master Caper, at the suit of master Three-pile the mercer, for some four suits of peach-colour'd satin, which now peaches him a beggar. Then have we here young Dizy, and young master Deep-vow, and master Copper-spur, and master Starve-lackey the rapier and dagger-man, and young Drop-heir that kill'd lusty Pudding, and master Forthright the tilter, and brave master Shoe-tie the great traveller, and wild Half-can that stabb'd Pots, and, I think, forty more; all great doers in our trade, and are now for the Lord's sake.

Enter Abhorson.

Abhor. Sirrah, bring Barnardine hither.

Clo. Master Barnardine! you must rise and be hang'd, master Barnardine!

Abhor. What, ho, Barnardine!

Barnar. [*Within.*] A pox o' your throats! Who makes that noise there? What are you?

Clo. Your friends, sir; the hangman: You must be so good, sir, to rise and be put to death.

Barnar. [*Within.*] Away, you rogue, away; I am sleepy.

Abhor. Tell him, he must awake, and that quickly too.

Clo. Pray, master Barnardine, awake till you are executed, and sleep afterwards.

Abhor. Go in to him, and fetch him out.

Clo. He is coming, sir, he is coming; I hear his straw rustle.

Enter BARNARDINE.

Abhor. Is the axe upon the block, sirrah?

Clo. Very ready, sir.

Barnar. How now, Abhorson? what's the news with you?

Abhor. Truly, sir, I would desire you to clap into your prayers; for, look you, the warrant's come.

Barnar. You rogue, I have been drinking all night, I am not fitted for't.

Clo. O, the better, sir; for he that drinks all night, and is hang'd betimes in the morning, may sleep the sounder all the next day.

Enter Duke.

Abhor. Look you, sir, here comes your ghostly father; Do we jest now, think you?

Duke. Sir, induced by my charity, and hearing how hastily you are to depart, I am come to advise you, comfort you, and pray with you.

Barnar. Friar, not I; I have been drinking hard

all night, and I will have more time to prepare me, or they shall beat out my brains with billets: I will not consent to die this day, that's certain.

Duke. O, sir, you must: and therefore, I beseech you,
Look forward on the journey you shall go.

Barnar. I swear, I will not die to-day for any man's persuasion.

Duke. But hear you,——

Barnar. Not a word; if you have any thing to say to me, come to my ward; for thence will not I to-day. [*Exit.*

Enter Provost.

Duke. Unfit to live, or die: O, gravel heart!—
After him, fellows; bring him to the block.
[*Exeunt* Abhorson *and* Clown.

Prov. Now, sir, how do you find the prisoner?

Duke. A creature unprepar'd, unmeet for death;
And, to transport him in the mind he is,
Were damnable.

Prov. Here in the prison, father,
There died this morning of a cruel fever
One Ragozine, a most notorious pirate,
A man of Claudio's years; his beard, and head,
Just of his colour: What if we do omit
This reprobate, till he were well inclined;
And satisfy the deputy with the visage
Of Ragozine, more like to Claudio?

Duke. O, 'tis an accident that heaven provides!
Despatch it presently; the hour draws on
Prefix'd by Angelo: See, this be done,

And sent according to command; whiles I
Persuade this rude wretch willingly to die.

Prov. This shall be done, good father, presently.
But Barnardine must die this afternoon:
And how shall we continue Claudio,
To save me from the danger that might come,
If he were known alive?

Duke. Let this be done;—Put them in secret holds,
Both Barnardine and Claudio: Ere twice
The sun hath made his journal greeting to
The under generation,[3] you shall find
Your safety manifested.

Prov. I am your free dependant.

Duke. Quick, despatch,
And send the head to Angelo. [*Exit* Provost.
Now will I write letters to Angelo,—
The provost, he shall bear them,—whose contents
Shall witness to him, I am near at home;
And that, by great injunctions, I am bound
To enter publickly: him I'll desire
To meet me at the consecrated fount,
A league below the city; and from thence,
By cold gradation and weal-balanced form,
We shall proceed with Angelo.

Re-enter Provost.

Prov. Here is the head; I'll carry it myself.

Duke. Convenient is it: Make a swift return;
For I would commune with you of such things,
That want no ear but yours.

Prov. I'll make all speed. [*Exit.*

[3] The antipodes.

Isab. [*Within.*] Peace, ho, be here!

Duke. The tongue of Isabel :—She's come to know,
If yet her brother's pardon be come hither:
But I will keep her ignornat of her good,
To make her heavenly comforts of despair,
When it is least expected.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. Ho, by your leave.

Duke. Good morning to you, fair and gracious daughter.

Isab. The better, given me by so holy a man.
Hath yet the deputy sent my brother's pardon?

Duke. He hath releas'd him, Isabel, from the world;
His head is off, and sent to Angelo.

Isab. Nay, but it is not so.

Duke. It is no other:
Show your wisdom, daughter, in your close patience.

Isab. O, I will to him, and pluck out his eyes.

Duke. You shall not be admitted to his sight.

Isab. Unhappy Claudio! Wretched Isabel!
Injurious world! Most damned Angelo!

Duke. This nor hurts him, nor profits you a jot:
Forbear it therefore; give your cause to heaven.
Mark what I say; which you shall find
By every syllable, a faithful verity:
The duke comes home to-morrow;—nay, dry your eyes;
One of our convent, and his confessor,
Gives me this instance: Already he hath carried
Notice to Escalus and Angelo;
Who do prepare to meet him at the gates,

There to give up their power. If you can, pace your wisdom
In that good path that I would wish it go;
And you shall have your bosom[4] on this wretch,
Grace of the duke, revenges to your heart,
And general honour.

Isab. I am directed by you.

Duke. This letter then to friar Peter give;
'Tis that he sent me of the duke's return:
Say, by this token, I desire his company
At Mariana's house to-night. Her cause, and yours,
I'll perfect him withal; and he shall bring you
Before the duke; and to the head of Angelo
Accuse him home, and home. For my poor self,
I am combined by a sacred vow,
And shall be absent. Wend[5] you with this letter:
Command these fretting waters from your eyes
With a light heart; trust not my holy order,
If I pervert your course.—Who's here?

Enter LUCIO.

Lucio. Good even!
Friar, where is the provost?

Duke. Not within, sir.

Lucio. O, pretty Isabella, I am pale at mine heart, to see thine eyes so red: thou must be patient: I am fain to dine and sup with water and bran; I dare not for my head fill my belly; one fruitful meal would set me to't: But they say the duke will be here to-morrow. By my troth, Isabel, I lov'd thy brother:

[4] Your heart's desire. [5] Go.

if the old fantastical duke of dark corners had been at home, he had lived. [*Exit* ISABELLA.

Duke. Sir, the duke is marvellous little beholden to your reports; but the best is, he lives not in them.

Lucio. Friar, thou knowest not the duke so well as I do: he's a better woodman than thou takest him for.

Duke. Well, you'll answer this one day. Fare ye well.

Lucio. Nay, tarry; I'll go along with thee; I can tell thee pretty tales of the duke.

Duke. You have told me too many of him already, sir, if they be true; if not true, none were enough.

Lucio. I was once before him for getting a wench with child.

Duke. Did you such a thing?

Lucio. Yes, marry, did I: but was fain to forswear it; they would else have married me to the rotten medlar.

Duke. Sir, your company is fairer than honest: Rest you well.

Lucio. By my troth, I'll go with thee to the lane's end: If bawdy talk offend you, we'll have very little of it: Nay, friar, I am a kind of burr, I shall stick.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Room in Angelo's *House.*

Enter ANGELO *and* ESCALUS.

Escal. Every letter he hath writ hath disvouch'd[6] other.

Ang. In most uneven and distracted manner. His actions show much like to madness: pray heaven, his wisdom be not tainted! And why meet him at the gates, and re-deliver our authorities there?

Escal. I guess not.

Ang. And why should we proclaim it in an hour before his entering, that, if any crave redress of injustice, they should exhibit their petitions in the street?

Escal. He shows his reason for that: to have a despatch of complaints; and to deliver us from devices hereafter, which shall then have no power to stand against us.

Ang. Well, I beseech you, let it be proclaim'd:
Betimes i' the morn, I'll call you at your house:
Give notice to such men of sort and suit,[7]
As are to meet him.

Escal. I shall, sir: fare you well.

[*Exit.*

Ang. Good night.—
This deed unshapes me quite, makes me unpregnant,
And dull to all proceedings. A deflower'd maid!

[6] Contradicted. [7] Figure and rank.

And by an eminent body, that enforc'd
The law against it!—But that her tender shame
Will not proclaim against her maiden loss,
How might she tongue me? Yet reason dares[8] her?
—no:
For my authority bears a credent[9] bulk,
That no particular scandal once can touch,
But it confounds the breather.[1] He should have liv'd,
Save that his riotous youth, with dangerous sense,
Might, in the times to come, have ta'en revenge,
By so receiving a dishonour'd life,
With ransome of such shame. 'Would yet he had liv'd!
Alack, when once our grace we have forgot,
Nothing goes right; we would, and we would not.
[*Exit.*

SCENE V.

Fields without the Town.

Enter Duke *in his own habit, and Friar* PETER.

Duke. These letters at fit time deliver me.
[*Giving letters.*
The provost knows our purpose, and our plot.
The matter being afoot, keep your instruction,
And hold you ever to our special drift;
Though sometimes you do blench[2] from this to that,
As cause doth minister. Go, call at Flavius' house,
And tell him where I stay: give the like notice,
To Valentinus, Rowland, and to Crassus,

[8] Calls, challenges her to do it. [9] Credit unquestionable.
[1] Utterer. [2] Start off.

And bid them bring the trumpets to the gate;
But send me Flavius first.

F. Peter. It shall be speeded well.

[*Exit* Friar.

Enter VARRIUS.

Duke. I thank thee, Varrius; thou hast made good haste:
Come, we will walk: There's other of our friends
Will greet us here anon, my gentle Varrius. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

Street near the City Gate.

Enter ISABELLA *and* MARIANA.

Isab. To speak so indirectly, I am loath;
I would say the truth; but to accuse him so,
That is your part: yet I'm advis'd to do it;
He says, to veil full[3] purpose.

Mari. Be rul'd by him.

Isab. Besides, he tells me, that, if peradventure
He speak against me on the adverse side,
I should not think it strange; for 'tis a physick,
That's bitter to sweet end.

Mari. I would, friar Peter—

Isab. O, peace; the friar is come.

Enter Friar PETER.

F. Peter. Come, I have found you out a stand most fit,

[3] Availful.

Where you may have such vantage[4] on the duke,
He shall not pass you; Twice have the trumpets sounded;
The generous[5] and gravest citizens
Have hent[6] the gates, and very near upon
The duke is ent'ring; therefore hence, away.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. A publick Place near the City Gate.

MARIANA, *(veil'd,)* ISABELLA, *and* PETER, *at a distance. Enter at opposite doors,* Duke, VARRIUS, Lords; ANGELO, ESCALUS, LUCIO, Provost, Officers, *and* Citizens.

Duke. My very worthy cousin, fairly met:—
Our old and faithful friend, we are glad to see you.
Ang. and Escal. Happy return be to your royal grace!
Duke. Many and hearty thankings to you both.
We have made inquiry of you; and we hear
Such goodness of your justice, that our soul
Cannot but yield you forth to publick thanks,
Forerunning more requital.
Ang. You make my bonds still greater.
Duke. O, your desert speaks loud; and I should wrong it,
To lock it in the wards of covert bosom,
When it deserves with characters of brass
A forted residence, 'gainst the tooth of time,
And razure of oblivion: Give me your hand

[4] Advantage. [5] Most noble. [6] Seized.

And let the subject see, to make them know
That outward courtesies would fain proclaim
Favours that keep within.—Come, Escalus;
You must walk by us on our other hand;—
And good supporters are you.

PETER *and* ISABELLA *come forward.*

F. Peter. Now is your time; speak loud, and kneel before him.

Isab. Justice, O royal duke! Vail[1] your regard
Upon a wrong'd, I'd fain have said, a maid!
O worthy prince, dishonour not your eye
By throwing it on any other object,
Till you have heard me in my true complaint,
And given me, justice, justice, justice, justice!

Duke. Relate your wrongs: In what? By whom? Be brief:
Here is lord Angelo shall give you justice;
Reveal yourself to him.

Isab. O, worthy duke,
You bid me seek redemption of the devil:
Hear me yourself; for that which I must speak
Must either punish me, not being believ'd,
Or wring redress from you: hear me, O, hear me, here.

Ang. My lord, her wits, I fear me, are not firm:
She hath been a suitor to me for her brother,
Cut off by course of justice.

Isab. By course of justice!

Ang. And she will speak most bitterly, and strange.

Isab. Most strange, but yet most truly, will I speak:

[1] Lower.

That Angelo's forsworn; is it not strange?
That Angelo's a murderer; is't not strange?
That Angelo is an adulterous thief,
An hypocrite, a virgin-violator;
Is it not strange, and strange?

Duke. Nay, ten times strange,

Isab. It is not truer he is Angelo,
Than this is all as true as it is strange:
Nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth
To the end of reckoning.

Duke. Away with her:—Poor soul,
She speaks this in the infirmity of sense.

Isab. O prince, I conjure thee, as thou believ'st
There is another comfort than this world,
That thou neglect me not, with that opinion
That I am touch'd with madness: make not impossible
That which but seems unlike: 'tis not impossible,
But one, the wicked'st caitiff on the ground,
May seem as shy, as grave, as just, as absolute,
As Angelo; even so may Angelo,
In all his dressings,[8] characts, titles, forms,
Be an arch-villain: believe it, royal prince,
If he be less, he's nothing; but he's more,
Had I more name for badness.

Duke. By mine honesty,
If she be mad, (as I believe no other,)
Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense,
Such a dependency of thing on thing,
As e'er I heard in madness.

Isab. O, gracious duke,

[8] Habits and characters of office.

Harp not on that; nor do not banish reason
For inequality: but let your reason serve
To make the truth appear, where it seems hid;
And hide the false, seems true.

Duke. Many that are not mad,
Have, sure, more lack of reason.—What would you say?

Isab. I am the sister of one Claudio,
Condemn'd upon the act of fornication
To lose his head; condemn'd by Angelo:
I, in probation of a sisterhood,
Was sent to by my brother: One Lucio
As then the messenger;—

Lucio. That's I, an't like your grace;
I came to her from Claudio, and desir'd her
To try her gracious fortune with lord Angelo,
For her poor brother's pardon.

Isab. That's he, indeed.

Duke. You were not bid to speak.

Lucio. No, my good lord;
Nor wish'd to hold my peace.

Duke. I wish you now then;
Pray you, take note of it: and when you have
A business for yourself, pray heaven, you then
Be perfect.

Lucio. I warrant your honour.

Duke. The warrant's for yourself; take heed to it.

Isab. This gentleman told somewhat of my tale.

Lucio. Right.

Duke. It may be right; but you are in the wrong
To speak before your time.—Proceed.

Isab. I went
To this pernicious caitiff deputy.

Duke. That's somewhat madly spoken.

Isab. Pardon it;
The phrase is to the matter.

Duke. Mended again: the matter;—Proceed.

Isab. In brief,—to set the needless process by,
How I persuaded, how I pray'd, and kneel'd,
How he refell'd[9] me, and how I reply'd;
(For this was of much length,) the vile conclusion
I now begin with grief and shame to utter:
He would not, but by gift of my chaste body
To his concupiscible intemperate lust,
Release my brother; and, after much debatement,
My sisterly remorse[1] confutes mine honour,
And I did yield to him: But the next morn betimes,
His purpose surfeiting, he sends a warrant
For my poor brother's head.

Duke. This is most likely!

Isab. O, that it were as like, as it is true!

Duke. By heaven, fond[2] wretch, thou know'st not what thou speak'st;
Or else thou art suborn'd against his honour,
In hateful practice:[3] First, his integrity
Stands without blemish:—next, it imports no reason,
That with such vehemency he should pursue
Faults proper to himself: if he had so offended,
He would have weigh'd thy brother by himself,
And not have cut him off: Some one hath set you on;
Confess the truth, and say by whose advice
Thou cam'st here to complain.

Isab. And is this all?
Then, oh, you blessed ministers above,

[9] Refuted. [1] Pity. [2] Foolish. [3] Conspiracy.

Keep me in patience; and, with ripen'd time,
Unfold the evil which is here wrapt up
In countenance!—Heaven shield your grace from woe,
As I, thus wrong'd, hence unbelieved go!

Duke. I know, you'd fain be gone:—An officer!
To prison with her:—Shall we thus permit
A blasting and a scandalous breath to fall
On him so near us? This needs must be a practice.
—Who knew of your intent, and coming hither?

Isab. One that I would were here, friar Lodowick.

Duke. A ghostly father, belike:—Who knows that Lodowick?

Lucio. My lord, I know him; 'tis a medling friar;
I do not like the man: had he been lay, my lord,
For certain words he spake against your grace
In your retirement, I had swing'd[4] him soundly.

Duke. Words against me? This' a good friar, belike!
And to set on this wretched woman here
Against our substitute!—Let this friar be found.

Lucio. But yesternight, my lord, she and that friar
I saw them at the prison: a sawcy friar,
A very scurvy fellow.

F. Peter. Blessed be your royal grace!
I have stood by, my lord, and I have heard
Your royal ear abus'd: First, hath this woman
Most wrongfully accus'd your substitute;
Who is as free from touch or soil with her,
As she from one ungot.

Duke. We did believe no less.
Know you that friar Lodowick, that she speaks of!

[4] Beat.

F. Peter. I know him for a man divine and holy;
Not scurvy, nor a temporary medler,
As he's reported by this gentleman;
And, on my trust, a man that never yet
Did, as he vouches, misreport your grace.

Lucio. My lord, most villainously; believe it.

F. Peter. Well, he in time may come to clear himself;
But at this instant he is sick, my lord,
Of a strange fever: Upon his mere[5] request,
(Being come to knowledge that there was complaint
Intended 'gainst lord Angelo,) came I hither,
To speak, as from his mouth, what he doth know
Is true, and false; and what he with his oath,
And all probation, will make up full clear,
Whensoever he's convented.[6] First, for this woman;
(To justify this worthy nobleman,
So vulgarly[7] and personally accus'd,)
Her shall you hear disproved to her eyes,
Till she herself confess it.

Duke. Good friar, let's hear it.

[ISABELLA *is carried off, guarded; and* MARIANA *comes forward.*

Do you not smile at this lord Angelo?—
O heaven! the vanity of wretched fools!—
Give us some seats.—Come, cousin Angelo;
In this I'll be impartial; be you judge
Of your own cause.—Is this the witness, friar?
First, let her show her face; and, after, speak.

Mari. Pardon, my lord; I will not show my face,
Until my husband bid me.

[5] Simple. [6] Convened. [7] Publickly.

Duke. What, are you married?
Mari. No, my lord.
Duke. Are you a maid?
Mari. No, my lord.
Duke. A widow then?
Mari. Neither, my lord.
Duke. Why, you
Are nothing then:—Neither maid, widow, nor wife?
Lucio. My lord, she may be a punk; for many of them are neither maid, widow, nor wife.
Duke. Silence that fellow: I would, he had some cause
To prattle for himself.
Lucio. Well, my lord.
Mari. My lord, I do confess I ne'er was married;
And, I confess, besides, I am no maid:
I have known my husband; yet my husband knows not,
That ever he knew me.
Lucio. He was drunk then, my lord; it can be no better.
Duke. For the benefit of silence, 'would thou wert so too.
Lucio. Well, my lord.
Duke. This is no witness for lord Angelo.
Mari. Now I come to't, my lord:
She, that accuses him of fornication,
In self-same manner doth accuse my husband;
And charges him, my lord, with such a time,
When I'll depose I had him in mine arms,
With all the effect of love.
Ang. Charges she more than me?

Mari. Not that I know.

Duke. No? you say, your husband.

Mari. Why, just, my lord, and that is Angelo,
Who thinks, he knows, that he ne'er knew my body,
But knows, he thinks, that he knows Isabel's.

Ang. This is a strange abuse:[8]—Let's see thy face.

Mari. My husband bids me; now I will unmask.
[*Unveiling.*
This is that face, thou cruel Angelo,
Which, once thou swor'st, was worth the looking on;
This is the hand, which, with a vow'd contract,
Was fast belock'd in thine: this is the body
That took away the match from Isabel,
And did supply thee at thy garden-house,
In her imagin'd person.

Duke. Know you this woman?

Lucio. Carnally, she says.

Duke. Sirrah, no more.

Lucio. Enough, my lord.

Ang. My lord, I must confess, I know this woman;
And, five years since, there was some speech of marriage
Betwixt myself and her; which was broke off,
Partly, for that her promised proportions
Came short of composition;[9] but, in chief,
For that her reputation was disvalued
In levity: since which time of five years,
I never spake with her, saw her, nor heard from her,
Upon my faith and honour.

Mari. Noble prince,
As there comes light from heaven, and words from breath,

[8] Deception. [9] Her fortune fell short.

As there is sense in truth, and trùth in virtue,
I am affianc'd this man's wife, as strongly
As words could make up vows: and, my good lord,
But Tuesday night last gone, in his garden-house,
He knew me as a wife: As this is true
Let me in safety raise me from my knees;
Or else for ever be confixed here,
A marble monument!

Ang. I did but smile till now;
Now, good my lord, give me the scope of justice;
My patience here is touch'd: I do perceive,
These poor informal[1] women are no more
But instruments of some more mightier member,
That sets them on: Let me have way, my lord,
To find this practice[2] out.

Duke. Ay, with my heart;
And punish them unto your height of pleasure.—
Thou foolish friar; and thou pernicious woman,
Compáct with her that's gone! think'st thou, thy oaths,
Though they would swear down each particular saint,
Were testimonies against his worth and credit,
That's seal'd in approbation?—You, lord Escalus,
Sit with my cousin; lend him your kind pains
To find out this abuse, whence 'tis deriv'd.—
There is another friar that set them on;
Let him be sent for.

F. Peter. Would he were here, my lord; for he, indeed,
Hath set the women on to this complaint:
Your provost knows the place where he abides,
And he may fetch him.

[1] Crazy. [2] Conspiracy.

Duke. Go, do it instantly.— [*Exit* Provost.
And you, my noble and well-warranted cousin,
Whom it concerns to hear this matter forth,[3]
Do with your injuries as seems you best,
In any chastisement: I for a while
Will leave you; but stir not you, till you have well
Determined upon these slanderers.

Escal. My lord, we'll do it thoroughly.—[*Exit* Duke.] Signior Lucio, did not you say, you knew that friar Lodowick to be a dishonest person?

Lucio. *Cucullus non facit monachum:* honest in nothing, but in his clothes; and one that hath spoke most villainous speeches of the duke.

Escal. We shall entreat you to abide here till he come, and enforce them against him: we shall find this friar a notable fellow.

Lucio. As any in Vienna, on my word.

Escal. Call that same Isabel here once again; [*To an Attendant.*] I would speak with her: Pray you, my lord, give me leave to question; you shall see how I'll handle her.

Lucio. Not better than he, by her own report.

Escal. Say you?

Lucio. Marry, sir, I think, if you handled her privately, she would sooner confess; perchance, publickly she'll be ashamed.

Re-enter Officers, *with* ISABELLA; *the* Duke, *in the Friar's habit, and* Provost.

Escal. I will go darkly to work with her.

Lucio. That's the way; for women are light at midnight.

[3] To the end.

Escal. Come on, mistress: [*To* ISABELLA.] here's a gentlewoman denies all that you have said.

Lucio. My lord, here comes the rascal I spoke of; here with the provost.

Escal. In very good time:—speak not you to him, till we call upon you.

Lucio. Mum.

Escal. Come, sir: Did you set these women on to slander lord Angelo? they have confess'd you did.

Duke. 'Tis false.

Escal. How! know you where you are?

Duke. Respect to your great place! and let the devil
Be sometime honour'd for his burning throne:—
Where is the duke? 'tis he should hear me speak.

Escal. The duke's in us; and we will hear you speak:
Look, you speak justly.

Duke. Boldly, at least:—But, O, poor souls,
Come you to seek the lamb here of the fox?
Good night to your redress. Is the duke gone?
Then is your cause gone too. The duke's unjust,
Thus to retort[9] your manifest appeal,
And put your trial in the villain's mouth,
Which here you come to accuse.

Lucio. This is the rascal; this is he I spoke of.

Escal. Why, thou unreverend and unhallow'd friar!
Is't not enough, thou hast suborn'd these women
To accuse this worthy man; but, in foul mouth,
And in the witness of his proper ear,
To call him villain?

[9] Refer back.

And then to glance from him to the duke himself;
To tax him with injustice?—Take him hence;
To the rack with him:—We'll touze you joint by joint,
But we will know this purpose:—What! unjust?

Duke. Be not so hot; the duke
Dare no more stretch this finger of mine, than he
Dare rack his own; his subject am I not,
Nor here provincial:[1] My business in this state
Made me a looker-on here in Vienna,
Where I have seen corruption boil and bubble,
Till it o'er-run the stew: laws, for all faults;
But faults so countenanc'd, that the strong statutes
Stand like the forfeits in a barber's shop,
As much in mock as mark.

Escal. Slander to the state! Away with him to prison.

Ang. What can you vouch against him, signior Lucio?
Is this the man that you did tell us of?

Lucio. 'Tis he, my lord. Come hither, good-man bald-pate: Do you know me?

Duke. I remember you, sir, by the sound of your voice: I met you at the prison, in the absence of the duke.

Lucio. O, did you so? And do you remember what you said of the duke?

Duke. Most notedly, sir.

Lucio. Do you so, sir? And was the duke a flesh-monger, a fool, and a coward, as you then reported him to be?

[1] Accountable.

Duke. You must, sir, change persons with me, ere you make that my report: you, indeed, spoke so of him; and much more, much worse.

Lucio. O thou damnable fellow! Did not I pluck thee by the nose, for thy speeches?

Duke. I protest, I love the duke, as I love myself.

Ang. Hark! how the villain would close now, after his treasonable abuses.

Escal. Such a fellow is not to be talk'd withal:—Away with him to prison:—Where is the provost?—Away with him to prison; lay bolts enough upon him: let him speak no more:—Away with those giglots[2] too, and with the other confederate companion. [*The* Provost *lays hands on the* Duke.

Duke. Stay, sir; stay a while.

Ang. What! resists he? Help him, Lucio.

Lucio. Come, sir; come, sir; come, sir; foh, sir: Why, you bald-pated, lying rascal! you must be hooded, must you? Show your knave's visage, with a pox to you! show your sheep-biting face, and be hang'd an hour! Will't not off?

[*Pulls off the Friar's hood, and discovers the* Duke.

Duke. Thou art the first knave, that e'er made a duke.——

First, Provost, let me bail these gentle three:——

Sneak not away, sir; [*To* LUCIO.] for the friar and you

Must have a word anon:—lay hold on him.

Lucio. This may prove worse than hanging.

[2] Wantons.

Duke. What you have spoke, I pardon; sit you down.—— [*To* ESCALUS.
We'll borrow place of him:—Sir, by your leave: [*To* ANGELO.
Hast thou or word, or wit, or impudence,
That yet can do thee office?[3] If thou hast,
Rely upon it till my tale be heard,
And hold no longer out.

Ang. O my dread lord,
I should be guiltier than my guiltiness,
To think I can be undiscernible,
When I perceive, your grace, like power divine,
Hath look'd upon my passes:[4] Then, good prince,
No longer session hold upon my shame,
But let my trial be mine own confession;
Immediate sentence then, and sequent[5] death,
Is all the grace I beg.

Duke. Come hither, Mariana:—
Say, wast thou e'er contracted to this woman?

Ang. I was, my lord.

Duke. Go take her hence, and marry her instantly.—
Do you the office, friar; which consummate,
Return him here again:—Go with him, Provost.
[*Exeunt* ANGELO, MARIANA, PETER, *and* Provost.

Escal. My lord, I am more amaz'd at his dishonour,
Than at the strangeness of it.

Duke. Come hither, Isabel:
Your friar is now your prince: As I was then
Advértising,[6] and holy to your business,
Not changing heart with habit, I am still

[3] Service. [4] Devices. [5] Following. [6] Attentive.

Attorney'd at your service.

Isab. O, give me pardon,
That I, your vassal, have employ'd and pain'd
Your unknown sovereignty.

Duke. You are pardon'd, Isabel:
And now, dear maid, be you as free to us.
Your brother's death, I know, sits at your heart;
And you may marvel, why I obscur'd myself,
Labouring to save his life; and would not rather
Make rash remonstrance of my hidden power,
Than let him so be lost: O, most kind maid,
It was the swift celerity of his death,
Which I did think with slower foot came on,
That brain'd my purpose: But, peace be with him!
That life is better life, past fearing death,
Than that which lives to fear: make it your comfort,
So happy is your brother.

Re-enter ANGELO, MARIANA, PETER, *and* Provost.

Isab. I do, my lord.

Duke. For this new-married man, approaching here,
Whose salt imagination yet hath wrong'd
Your well-defended honour, you must pardon
For Mariana's sake: but as he adjudg'd your brother,
(Being criminal, in double violation
Of sacred chastity, and of promise-breach,
Thereon dependent, for your brother's life,)
The very mercy of the law cries out
Most audible, even from his proper[7] tongue,
An Angelo for Claudio, death for death.

[7] Angelo's own tongue.

Hastes till pays haste, and leisure answers leisure;
Like doth quit like, and *Measure* still *for Measure*?
Then, Angelo, thy fault's thus manifested;
Which though thou would'st deny, denies thee vantage:
We do condemn thee to the very block
Where Claudio stoop'd to death, and with like haste;—
Away with him.

Mari. O, my most gracious lord,
I hope you will not mock me with a husband!

Duke. It is your husband mock'd you with a husband:
Consenting to the safeguard of your honour,
I thought your marriage fit; else imputation,
For that he knew you, might reproach your life,
And choke your good to come: for his possessions,
Although by confiscation they are ours,
We do instate and widow you withal,
To buy you a better husband.

Mari. O, my dear lord,
I crave no other, nor no better man.

Duke. Never crave him; we are definitive.

Mari. Gentle, my liege,— [*Kneeling.*

Duke. You do but lose your labour;
Away with him to death.—Now, sir, [*To* LUCIO.] to you.

Mari. O, my good lord!—Sweet Isabel, take my part;
Lend me your knees, and all my life to come
I'll lend you, all my life to do you service.

Duke. Against all sense[3] you do importune her:
Should she kneel down, in mercy of this fact,

[3] Reason and affection.

Her brother's ghost his paved bed would break,
And take her hence in horror.
Mari. Isabel,
Sweet Isabel, do yet but kneel by me;
Hold up your hands, say nothing, I'll speak all.
They say, best men are moulded out of faults;
And, for the most, become much more the better
For being a little bad: so may my husband.
O, Isabel! will you not lend a knee?
Duke. He dies for Claudio's death.
Isab. Most bounteous sir,
[*Kneeling.*
Look, if it please you, on this man condemn'd,
As if my brother liv'd: I partly think,
A due sincerity govern'd his deeds,
Till he did look on me; since it is so,
Let him not die: My brother had but justice,
In that he did the thing for which he died:
For Angelo,
His act did not o'ertake his bad intent?
And must be buried but as an intent
That perish'd by the way: thoughts are no subjects;
Intents but merely thoughts.
Mari. Merely, my lord.
Duke. Your suit's unprofitable; stand up, I say.—
I have bethought me of another fault:—
Provost, how came it, Claudio was beheaded
At an unusual hour?
Prov. It was commanded so.
Duke. Had you a special warrant for the deed?
Prov. No, my good lord; it was by private message.

Duke. For which I do discharge you of your office:
Give up your keys.

Prov. Pardon me, noble lord:
I thought it was a fault, but knew it not;
Yet did repent me, after more advice:[9]
For testimony whereof, one in the prison
That should by private order else have died,
I have reserv'd alive.

Duke. What's he?

Prov. His name is Barnardine.

Duke. I would thou had'st done so by Claudio.—
Go, fetch him hither; let me look upon him.

[*Exit* Provost.

Escal. I am sorry, one so learned and so wise
As you, lord Angelo, have still appear'd,
Should slip so grossly, both in the heat of blood,
And lack of temper'd judgment afterward.

Ang. I am sorry, that such sorrow I procure:
And so deep sticks it in my penitent heart,
That I crave death more willingly than mercy;
'Tis my deserving, and I do entreat it.

Re-enter Provost, BARNARDINE, CLAUDIO, *and* JULIET.

Duke. Which is that Barnardine?

Prov. This, my lord.

Duke. There was a friar told me of this man:—
Sirrah, thou art said to have a stubborn soul,
That apprehends no further than this world,
And squar'st thy life according. Thou'rt condemn'd;
But, for those earthly faults, I quit them all;

[9] Consideration.

And pray thee, take this mercy to provide
For better times to come :——Friar, advise him;
I leave him to your hand.—What muffled fellow's
that?

Prov. This is another prisoner, that I sav'd,
That should have died when Claudio lost his head;
As like almost to Claudio, as himself.

[*Unmuffles* CLAUDIO.

Duke. If he be like your brother, [*To* ISABELLA.]
for his sake
Is he pardon'd; And, for your lovely sake,
Give me your hand, and say you will be mine,
He is my brother too: But fitter time for that.
By this, lord Angelo perceives he's safe;
Methinks, I see a quick'ning in his eye :—
Well, Angelo, your evil quits[1] you well:
Look that you love your wife; her worth, worth
yours.—
I find an apt remission in myself:
And yet here's one in place I cannot pardon;—
You, sirrah, [*To* LUCIO.] that knew me for a fool, a
coward,
One all of luxury,[2] an ass, a madman;
Wherein have I so deserved of you,
That you extol me thus?

Lucio. 'Faith, my lord, I spoke it but according to the trick:[3] If you will hang me for it, you may, but I had rather it would please you, I might be whipp'd.

Duke. Whipp'd first, sir, and hang'd after.—
Proclaim it, provost, round about the city;
If any woman's wrong'd by this lewd fellow,

[1] Requites. [2] Incontinence. [3] Thoughtless practice.

(As I have heard him swear himself, there's one
Whom he begot with child,) let her appear,
And he shall marry her: the nuptial finish'd,
Let him be whipp'd and hang'd.

Lucio. I beseech your highness, do not marry me to a whore! Your highness said even now, I made you a duke; good my lord, do not recompense me, in making me a cuckold.

Duke. Upon mine honour, thou shalt marry her.
Thy slanders I forgive; and therewithal
Remit thy other forfeits:[4]—Take him to prison:
And see our pleasure herein executed.

Lucio. Marrying a punk, my lord, is pressing to death, whipping, and hanging.

Duke. Sland'ring a prince deserves it.—
She, Claudio, that you wrong'd, look you restore.—
Joy to you, Mariana!—love her, Angelo;
I have confess'd her, and I know her virtue.—
Thanks, good friend Escalus, for thy much goodness:
There's more behind, that is more gratulate.[5]
Thanks, Provost, for thy care, and secrecy;
We shall employ thee in a worthier place:—
Forgive him, Angelo, that brought you home
The head of Ragozine for Claudio's;
The offence pardons itself.—Dear Isabel,
I have a motion much imports your good;
Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline,
What's mine is your's, and what is yours is mine:—
So, bring us to our palace; where we'll show
What's yet behind, that's meet you all should know.

[*Exeunt.*

[4] Punishments. [5] To reward.

The novel of Giraldi Cinthio, from which Shakspeare is supposed to have borrowed this fable, may be read in *Shakspeare illustrated*, elegantly translated, with remarks which will assist the enquirer to discover how much absurdity Shakspeare has admitted or avoided.

I cannot but suspect that some other had new-modelled the novel of Cinthio, or written a story which in some particulars resembled it, and that Cinthio was not the author whom Shakspeare immediately followed. The Emperor in Cinthio is named Maximine: the Duke, in Shakspeare's enumeration of the persons of the drama, is called Vincentio. This appears a very slight remark; but since the Duke has no name in the play, nor is ever mentioned but by his title, why should he be called Vincentio among the *persons*, but because the name was copied from the story, and placed superfluously at the head of the list by the meer habit of transcription? It is therefore likely that there was then a story of Vincentio Duke of Vienna, different from that of Maximine Emperor of the Romans.

Of this play, the light or comick part is very natural and pleasing, but the grave scenes, if a few passages be excepted, have more labour than elegance. The plot is rather intricate than artful. The time of the action is indefinite; some time, we know not how much, must have elapsed between the recess of the Duke and the imprisonment of Claudio; for he must have learned the story of Mariana in his disguise, or he delegated his power to a man already known to be corrupted. The unities of action and place are sufficiently preserved.

JOHNSON.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Don Pedro, *Prince of Arragon.*
Don John, *his bastard brother.*
Claudio, *a young lord of Florence, favourite to Don Pedro.*
Benedick, *a young lord of Padua, favourite likewise of Don Pedro.*
Leonato, *governor of Messina.*
Antonio, *his brother.*
Balthazar, *servant to Don Pedro.*
Borachio, Conrade, } *followers of Don John.*
Dogberry, Verges, } *two foolish officers.*
A Sexton.
A Friar.
A Boy.
Hero, *daughter to Leonato.*
Beatrice, *niece to Leonato.*
Margaret, Ursula. } *gentlewomen attending on Hero.*

Messengers, Watch, and Attendants,

SCENE, Messina.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Before Leonato's *House.*

Enter LEONATO, HERO, BEATRICE, *and others, with a* Messenger.

Leonato.

I Learn in this letter, that Don Pedro of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

Mess. He is very near by this; he was not three leagues off when I left him.

Leon. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

Mess. But few of any sort,[1] and none of name.

Leon. A victory is twice itself, when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here, that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine, called Claudio.

Mess. Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro: He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age; doing, in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion: he hath, indeed, better bettered expectation, than you must expect of me to tell you how.

[1] Kind.

Leon. He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

Mess. I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him; even so much, that joy could not show itself modest enough, without a badge of bitterness.

Leon. Did he break out into tears?

Mess. In great measure.[2]

Leon. A kind overflow of kindness: There are no faces truer than those that are so washed. How much better is it to weep at joy, than to joy at weeping?

Beat. I pray you, is signior Montanto returned from the wars, or no?

Mess. I know none of that name, lady; there was none such in the army of any sort.

Leon. What is he that you ask for, niece?

Hero. My cousin means signior Benedick of Padua.

Mess. O, he is returned; and as pleasant as ever he was.

Beat. He set up his bills here in Messina, and challenged cupid at the flight:[3] and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid, and challenged him at the bird-bolt.—I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he killed? for, indeed, I promised to eat all of his killing.

Leon. Faith, niece, you tax signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet[4] with you, I doubt it not.

Mess. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

[2] Abundance. [3] At long lengths. [4] Even.

Beat. You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it: he is a very valiant trencher-man, he hath an excellent stomach.

Mess. And a good soldier too, lady.

Beat. And a good soldier to a lady;—But what is he to a lord?

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man; stuffed with all honourable virtues.

Beat. It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man:[5] but for the stuffing,—Well, we are all mortal.

Leon. You must not, sir, mistake my niece: there is a kind of merry war betwixt signior Benedick and her: they never meet, but there is a skirmish of wit between them.

Beat. Alas, he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict, four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one: so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse: for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature.—Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

Mess. Is it possible?

Beat. Very easily possible: he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat, it ever changes with the next block.[6]

Mess. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

Beat. No: an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no

[5] A Cuckold. [6] Mould for a hat.

young squarer[7] now, that will make a voyage with him to the devil?

Mess. He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

Beat. O Lord! he will hang upon him like a disease: he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! if he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere he be cured.

Mess. I will hold friends with you, lady.

Beat. Do, good friend.

Leon. You will never run mad, niece.

Beat. No, not till a hot January.

Mess. Don Pedro is approached.

Enter Don PEDRO, *attended by* BALTHAZAR, *and others, Don* JOHN, CLAUDIO, *and* BENEDICK.

D. Pedro. Good signior Leonato, you are come to meet your trouble: the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it.

Leon. Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your grace: for trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but, when you depart from me, sorrow abides, and happiness takes his leave.

D. Pedro. You embrace your charge[8] too willingly. —I think, this is your daughter.

Leon. Her mother hath many times told me so.

Bene. Were you in doubt, sir, that you asked her?

Leon. Signior Benedick, no; for then were you a child.

[7] Quarrelsome fellow. [8] Trust.

D. Pedro. You have it full, Benedick: we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly, the lady fathers herself:—Be happy, lady! for you are like an honourable father.

Bene. If signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders, for all Messina, as like him as she is.

Beat. I wonder, that you will still be talking, signior Benedick; no body marks you.

Bene. What, my dear lady Disdain! are you yet living?

Beat. Is it possible, disdain should die, while she hath such meet food to feed it, as signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

Bene. Then is courtesy a turn-coat:—But it is certain, I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

Beat. A dear happiness to women; they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God, and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that; I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow, than a man swear he loves me.

Bene. God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratched face.

Beat. Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

Beat. A bird of my tongue, is better than a beast of yours.

Bene. I would, my horse had the speed of your tongue; and so good a continuer: But keep your way o' God's name; I have done.

Beat. You always end with a jade's trick; I know you of old.

D. Pedro. This is the sum of all: Leonato,—signior Claudio, and signior Benedick,—my dear friend Leonato, hath invited you all. I tell him, we shall stay here at the least a month; and he heartily prays, some occasion may detain us longer: I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

Leon. If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn.—Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

D. John. I thank you: I am not of many words, but I thank you.

Leon. Please it your grace lead on?

D. Pedro. Your hand, Leonato; we will go together. [*Exeunt all but* BENEDICK *and* CLAUDIO.

Claud. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of signior Leonato?

Bene. I noted her not; but I looked on her.

Claud. Is she not a modest young lady?

Bene. Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment; or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

Claud. No, I pray thee, speak in sober judgment.

Bene. Why, i'faith, methinks she is too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise: only this commendation I

can afford her; that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

Claud. Thou thinkest, I am in sport; I pray thee, tell me truly how thou likest her.

Bene. Would you buy her, that you inquire after her.

Claud. Can the world buy such a jewel?

Bene. Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow? or do you play the flouting Jack; to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song?

Claud. In mine eye, she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.

Bene. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter: there's her cousin, an she were not possessed with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty, as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope, you have no intent to turn husband; have you?

Claud. I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

Bene. Is it come to this, i'faith? Hath not the world one man, but he will wear his cap with suspicion? Shall I never see a bachelor of three-score again? Go to, i'faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it, and sigh away Sundays. Look, Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

Re-enter Don PEDRO.

D. Pedro. What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

Bene. I would, your grace would constrain me to tell.

D. Pedro. I charge thee on thy allegiance.

Bene. You hear, Count Claudio: I can be secret as a dumb man, I would have you think so; but on my allegiance,—mark you this, on my allegiance:—He is in love. With who?—now that is your grace's part.—Mark, how short his answer is:—With Hero, Leonato's short daughter.

Claud. If this were so, so were it uttered.

Bene. Like the old tale, my lord: it is not so, nor 'twas not so; but, indeed, God forbid it should be so.

Claud. If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

D. Pedro. Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

Claud. You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

D. Pedro. By my troth, I speak my thought.

Claud. And, in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

Bene. And, by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

Claud. That I love her, I feel.

D. Pedro. That she is worthy, I know.

Bene. That I neither feel how she should be loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me; I will die in it at the stake.

D. Pedro. Thou wast ever an obstinate heretick in the despite of beauty.

Claud. And never could maintain his part, but in the force of his will.

Bene. That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks: but that I will have a recheat[9] winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle[1] in an invisible baldrick,[2] all women shall pardon me: Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is, (for the which I may go the finer,) I will live a bachelor.

D. Pedro. I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

Bene. With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord; not with love: prove, that ever I lose more blood with love, than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen, and hang me up at the door of a brothel-house, for the sign of blind Cupid.

D. Pedro. Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

Bene. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat, and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder, and called Adam.[3]

D. Pedro. Well, as time shall try:

In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.

Bene. The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns, and set them in my forehead: and let me be vilely paint-

[9] The tune sounded to call off the dogs. [1] Hunting-horn.
[2] Girdle. [3] The name of a famous archer.

ed; and in such great letters as they write, *Here is good horse to hire*, let them signify under my sign,—*Here you may see Benedick the married man.*

Claud. If this should ever happen, thou would'st be horn-mad.

D. Pedro. Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

Bene. I look for an earthquake too then.

D. Pedro. Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the mean time, good signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's; commend me to him, and tell him, I will not fail him at supper; for, indeed, he hath made great preparation.

Bene. I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassage; and so I commit you—

Claud. To the tuition of God: From my house, (if I had it,)—

D. Pedro. The sixth of July: Your loving friend, Benedick.

Bene. Nay, mock not, mock not: The body of your discourse is sometime guarded[4] with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience; and so I leave you. [*Exit* BENEDICK.

Claud. My liege, your highness now may do me good.

D. Pedro. My love is thine to teach; teach it but how,

And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

Claud. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

[4] Trimmed.

D. Pedro. No child but Hero, she's his only heir:
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

Claud. O my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,
That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love:
But now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I lik'd her ere I went to wars.

D. Pedro. Thou wilt be like a lover presently,
And tire the hearer with a book of words:
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it;
And I will break with her, and with her father,
And thou shalt have her: Was't not to this end,
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

Claud. How sweetly do you minister to love,
That know love's grief by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

D. Pedro. What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity:
Look, what will serve, is fit: 'tis once,[5] thou lov'st;
And I will fit thee with the remedy.
I know, we shall have revelling to-night;
I will assume thy part in some disguise,
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio;
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,

[5] Once for all.

And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then, after, to her father will I break;
And, the conclusion is, she shall be thine:
In practice let us put it presently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in Leonato's *House.*

Enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO.

Leon. How now, brother? Where is my cousin, your son? Hath he provided this musick?

Ant. He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange news that you yet dreamed not of.

Leon. Are they good?

Ant. As the event stamps them; but they have a good cover, they show well outward. The prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached[6] alley in my orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: The prince discovered to Claudio, that he loved my niece your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance; and, if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top, and instantly break with you of it.

Leon. Hath the fellow any wit, that told you this?

Ant. A good sharp fellow: I will send for him, and question him yourself.

Leon. No, no; we will hold it as a dream, till it appear itself:—but I will acquaint my daughter

[6] Thickly-interwoven.

withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you, and tell her of it. [*Several persons cross the stage.*] Cousins, you know what you have to do.—O, I cry you mercy, friend; you go with me, and I will use your skill:— Good cousins have a care this busy time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Another Room in Leonato's *house.*

Enter Don JOHN *and* CONRADE.

Con. What the goujere,[7] my lord! why are you thus out of measure sad?

D. John. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds it, therefore the sadness is without limit.

Con. You should hear reason.

D. John. And when I have heard it, what blessing bringeth it?

Con. If not a present remedy, yet a patient sufferance.

D. John. I wonder, that thou being (as thou say'st thou art) born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend to no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw[8] no man in his humour.

Con. Yea, but you must not make the full show of this, till you may do it without controlment. You

[7] The venereal disease. [8] Flatter.

have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace; where it is impossible you should take true root, but by the fair weather that you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

D. John. I had rather be a canker[9] in a hedge, than a rose in his grace; and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all, than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any: in this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied that I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle, and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage: If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the mean time, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no use of your discontent?

D. John. I make all use of it, for I use it only. Who comes here? What news, Borachio?

Enter BORACHIO.

Bora. I came yonder from a great supper; the prince, your brother, is royally entertained by Leonato; and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

D. John. Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool, that betroths himself to unquietness?

Bora. Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

D. John. Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

Bora. Even he.

D. John. A proper squire! And who, and who? which way looks he?

9 Dog-rose.

Bora. Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

D. John. A very forward March-chick! How came you to this?

Bora. Being entertained for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad[1] conference: I whipt me behind the arras; and there heard it agreed upon, that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to count Claudio.

D. John. Come, come, let us thither; this may prove food to my displeasure: that young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow; if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way: You are both sure, and will assist me?

Con. To the death, my lord.

D. John. Let us to the great supper; their cheer is the greater, that I am subdued: 'Would the cook were of my mind!—Shall we go prove what's to be done?

Bora. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. A Hall in Leonato's *House.*

Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, HERO, BEATRICE, *and others.*

Leon. Was not count John here at supper?

Ant. I saw him not.

Beat. How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him, but I am heart-burned an hour after.

[1] Serious.

Hero. He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Beat. He were an excellent man, that were made just in the mid-way between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image, and says nothing; and the other, too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

Leon. Then half signior Benedick's tongue in count John's mouth, and half count John's melancholy in signior Benedick's face,—

Beat. With a good leg, and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world,—if he could get her good will.

Leon. By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

Ant. In faith, she is too curst.

Beat. Too curst is more than curst: I shall lessen God's sending that way: for it is said, *God sends a curst cow short horns;* but to a cow too curst he sends none.

Leon. So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

Beat. Just, if he send me no husband; for the which blessing, I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening: Lord! I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face; I had rather lie in the woollen.

Leon. You may light upon a husband, that hath no beard.

Beat. What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel, and make him my waiting gentlewoman? He that hath a beard, is more than a youth;

and he that hath no beard, is less than a man: and he that is more than a youth, is not for me; and he that is less than a man, I am not for him: Therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bear-herd, and lead his apes into hell.

Leon. Well then, go you into hell?

Beat. No; but to the gate; and there will the devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and say, *Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven; here's no place for you maids:* so deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter for the heavens; he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

Ant. Well, niece, [*To* HERO.] I trust, you will be ruled by your father.

Beat. Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make courtesy, and say, *Father, as it please you:*—but yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another courtesy, and say, *Father, as it please me.*

Leon. Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

Beat. Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

Leon. Daughter, remember, what I told you: if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

Beat. The fault will be in the musick, cousin, if

you be not woo'd in good time: if the prince be too important,[2] tell him, there is measure in every thing, and so dance out the answer. For hear me, Hero; Wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace: the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and, with his bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

Leon. Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

Beat. I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by day-light.

Leon. The revellers are entering; brother, make good room.

Enter Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHAZAR; *Don* JOHN, BORACHIO, MARGARET, URSULA, *and others, masked.*

D. Pedro. Lady, will you walk about with your friend?[3]

Hero. So you walk softly, and look sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and, especially, when I walk away.

D. Pedro. With me in your company?

Hero. I may say so, when I please.

D. Pedro. And when please you to say so?

Hero. When I like your favour; for God defend,[4] the lute should be like the case!

D. Pedro. My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove.

[2] Importunate. [3] Lover. [4] Forbid.

Hero. Why, then your visor should be thatch'd.

D. Pedro, Speak low, if you speak love.

[*Takes her aside.*

Bene. Well, I would you did like me.

Marg. So would not I, for your own sake; for I have many ill qualities.

Bene. Which is one?

Marg. I say my prayers aloud.

Bene. I love you the better; the hearers may cry, Amen.

Marg. God match me with a good dancer!

Balth. Amen.

Marg. And God keep him out of my sight, when the dance is done!—Answer, clerk.

Balth. No more words; the clerk is answered.

Urs. I know you well enough; you are signior Antonio.

Ant. At a word, I am not.

Urs. I know you by the waggling of your head.

Ant. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

Urs. You could never do him so ill-well, unless you were the very man: Here's his dry hand up and down; you are he, you are he.

Ant. At a word, I am not.

Urs. Come, come; do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he: graces will appear, and there's an end.

Beat. Will you not tell me who told you so?

Bene. No, you shall pardon me.

Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

Bene. Not now.

Beat. That I was disdainful,—and that I had my good wit out of the *Hundred merry Tales*;—Well, this was signior Benedick that said so.

Bene. What's he?

Beat. I am sure, you know him well enough.

Bene. Not I, believe me.

Beat. Did he never make you laugh?

Bene. I pray you, what is he?

Beat. Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible[5] slanders: none but libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villainy; for he both pleaseth men, and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beat him: I am sure, he is in the fleet; I would he had boarded[6] me.

Bene. When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

Beat. Do, do: he'll but break a comparison or two on me; which, peradventure, not marked, or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge' wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. [*Musick within.*] We must follow the leaders.

Bene. In every good thing.

Beat. Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning.

[*Dance. Then exeunt all but Don* JOHN, BORACHIO, *and* CLAUDIO.

D. John. Sure, my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it: The ladies follow her, and but one visor remains.

[5] Incredible. [6] Accosted.

Bora. And that is Claudio: I know him by his bearing.[7]

D. John. Are not you signior Benedick?

Claud. You know me well; I am he.

D. John. Signior, you are very near my brother in his love: he is enamoured on Hero; I pray you, dissuade him from her, she is no equal for his birth: you may do the part of an honest man in it.

Claud. How know you he loves her?

D. John. I heard him swear his affection.

Bora. So did I too; and he swore he would marry her to-night.

D. John. Come, let us to the banquet.

[*Exeunt Don* JOHN *and* BORACHIO.

Claud. Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.—
'Tis certain so;—the prince wooes for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things,
Save in the office and affairs of love:
Therefore, all hearts in love use their own tongues;
Let every eye negotiate for itself,
And trust no agent: for beauty is a witch,
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.[8]
This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not: Farewell therefore, Hero!

Re-enter BENEDICK.

Bene. Count Claudio?

Claud. Yea, the same.

Bene. Come, will you go with me?

Claud. Whither?

[7] Carriage, demeanour. [8] Passion.

Benc. Even to the next willow, about your own business, count. What fashion will you wear the garland of? About your neck, like an usurer's chain? or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

Claud. I wish him joy of her.

Bene. Why, that's spoken like an honest drover; so they sell bullocks. But did you think, the prince would have served you thus?

Claud. I pray you, leave me.

Bene. Ho! now you strike like the blind man; 'twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

Claud. If it will not be, I'll leave you. [*Exit.*

Bene. Alas, poor hurt fowl! Now will he creep into sedges.——But, that my lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool!—Ha! it may be, I go under that title, because I am merry.—Yea; but so; I am apt to do myself wrong: I am not so reputed: it is the base, the bitter disposition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her person, and so gives me out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

Re-enter Don PEDRO, HERO, *and* LEONATO.

D. Pedro. Now, signior, where's the count; Did you see him?

Bene. Troth, my lord, I have played the part of lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren; I told him, and, I think, I told him true, that your grace had got the good will of

this young lady; and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

D. Pedro. To be whipped! What's his fault?

Bene. The flat transgression of a school-boy; who, being overjoy'd with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

D. Pedro. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

Bene. Yet it had not been amiss, the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself; and the rod he might have bestow'd on you, who, as I take it, have stol'n his bird's nest.

D. Pedro. I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

Bene. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

D. Pedro. The lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you; the gentleman, that danced with her, told her, she is much wronged by you.

Bene. O, she misused me past the endurance of a block; an oak, but with one green leaf on it, would have answered her; my very visor began to assume life, and scold with her: She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester; that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible[9] conveyance, upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole

9 Incredible.

army shooting at me: She speaks poniards, and every word stabs: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her, she would infect to the north star. I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed: she would have made Hercules have turned spit; yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her; you shall find her the infernal Até[1] in good apparel. I would to God, some scholar would conjure her; for, certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follow her.

Re-enter CLAUDIO *and* BEATRICE.

D. Pedro. Look, here she comes.

Bene. Will your grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes, that you can devise to send me on; I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the farthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard; do you any embassage to the Pigmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy: You have no employment for me?

D. Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Bene. O God, sir, here's a dish I love not; I cannot endure my lady Tongue. [*Exit.*

D. Pedro. Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of signior Benedick.

[1] The Goddess of Discord.

Beat. Indeed, my lord, he lent it me a while; and I give him use[2] for it, a double heart for his single one: marry, once before, he won it of me with false dice, therefore your grace may well say, I have lost it.

D. Pedro. You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

Beat. So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

D. Pedro. Why, how now, count? wherefore are you sad?

Claud. Not sad, my lord.

D. Pedro. How then? Sick?

Claud. Neither, my lord.

Beat. The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well: but civil, count; civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

D. Pedro. I'faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won; I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained: name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

Leon. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it!

Beat. Speak, count, 'tis your cue.[3]

Claud. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much.—Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you, and dote upon the exchange.

[2] Interest. [3] Turn: a phrase among the players.

Beat. Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let him not speak, neither.

D. Pedro. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

Beat. Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care:—My cousin tells him in his ear, that he is in her heart.

Claud. And so she doth, cousin.

Beat. Good lord, for alliance!—Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sun-burned; I may sit in a corner, and cry, heigh ho! for a husband.

D. Pedro. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

Beat. I would rather have one of your father's getting: Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

D. Pedro. Will you have me, lady?

Beat. No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days; your grace is too costly to wear every day:—But, I beseech your grace, pardon me: I was born to speak all mirth, and no matter.

D. Pedro. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

Beat. No, sure, my lord, my mother cry'd; but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born.—Cousins, God give you joy!

Leon. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

Beat. I cry you mercy, uncle.—By your grace's pardon. [*Exit* BEATRICE.

D. Pedro. By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady.

Leon. There's little of the melancholy element in

her, my lord: she is never sad, but when she sleeps; and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamed of unhappiness, and waked herself with laughing.

D. Pedro. She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

Leon. O, by no means; she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

D. Pedro. She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

Leon. O lord, my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

D. Pedro. Count Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

Claud. To-morrow, my lord: 'Time goes on crutches, till love have all his rites.

Leon. Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night; and a time too brief too, to have all things answer my mind.

D. Pedro. Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but, I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us; I will, in the interim, undertake one of Hercules' labours; which is, to bring signior Benedick, and the lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection, the one with the other. I would fain have it a match; and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

Leon. My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

Claud. And I, my lord.

D. Pedro. And you too, gentle Hero?

Hero. I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

D. Pedro. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know: thus far can I praise him; he is of a noble strain,[4] of approved valour, and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick:—and I, with your two helps, will so practice on Benedick, that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy[5] stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer; his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Another Room in Leonato's *House.*

Enter Don JOHN *and* BORACHIO.

D. John. It is so; the count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

Bora. Yea, my lord; but I can cross it.

D. John. Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinable to me: I am sick in displeasure to him; and whatsoever comes athwart his affection, ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

Bora. Not honestly, my lord; but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

D. John. Show me briefly how.

[4] Lineage. [5] Fastidious.

Bora. I think, I told your lordship, a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting-gentlewoman to Hero.

D. John. I remember.

Bora. I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber-window.

D. John. What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

Bora. The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the prince your brother; spare not to tell him, that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio (whose estimation do you mightily hold up) to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

D. John. What proof shall I make of that?

Bora. Proof enough to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato: Look you for any other issue?

D. John. Only to despite them, I will endeavour any thing.

Bora. Go then, find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the count Claudio, alone: tell them, that you know that Hero loves me; intend[6] a kind of zeal both to the prince and Claudio, as—in love of your brother's honour who hath made this match; and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozened with the semblance of a maid,—that you have discovered thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial: offer them instances; which shall bear no less likelihood, than to see me at her chamber-

[6] Pretend.

window; hear me call Margaret, Hero; hear Margaret term me Borachio; and bring them to see this, the very night before the intended wedding: for, in the mean time, I will so fashion the matter, that Hero shall be absent; and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty, that jealousy shall be call'd assurance, and all the preparation overthrown.

D. John. Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice: Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

Bora. Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

D. John. I will presently go learn their day of marriage. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Leonato's *Garden.*

Enter BENEDICK *and a* Boy.

Bene. Boy,—

Boy. Signior.

Bene. In my chamber-window lies a book; bring it hither to me in the orchard.

Boy. I am here already, sir.

Bene. I know that;—but I would have thee hence, and here again. [*Exit* Boy.]—I do much wonder, that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn, by falling in love: And such a man is Claudio. I have known,

when there was no musick with him but the drum and fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known, when he would have walked ten mile afoot, to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain, and to the purpose, like an honest man, and a soldier; and now is he turn'd orthographer; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn, but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair; yet I am well: another is wise; yet I am well: another virtuous; yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. Ha! the prince and monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour.

[*Withdraws.*

Enter Don PEDRO, LEONATO, *and* CLAUDIO.

D. Pedro. Come, shall we hear this musick?

Claud. Yea, my good lord:—How still the evening is,

As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!

D. Pedro. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

Claud. O, very well, my lord: the musick ended,
We'll fit the kid-fox[7] with a penny-worth.

Enter BALTHAZAR, *with musick.*

D. Pedro. Come, Balthazar, we'll hear that song again.

Balth. O good my lord, tax not so bad a voice
To slander musick any more than once.

D. Pedro. It is the witness still of excellency,
To put a strange face on his own perfection:—
I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.

Balth. Because you talk of wooing, I will sing:
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit
To her he thinks not worthy; yet he wooes;
Yet will he swear, he loves.

D. Pedro. Nay, pray thee, come:
Or, if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.

Balth. Note this before my notes,
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

D. Pedro. Why these are very crotchets that he speaks;
Note, notes, forsooth, and noting! [*Musick.*

Bene. Now, *Divine air!* now is his soul ravished! —Is it not strange, that sheep's guts should hale souls out of men's bodies?—Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

[7] Young or cub-fox.

BALTHAZAR *sings.*

I.

Balth. *Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,*
Men were deceivers ever;
One foot in sea, and one on shore;
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so,
But let them go,
And be you blith and bonny;
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into, Hey nonny, nonny.

II.

Sing no more ditties, sing no mo[8]
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy.
Then sigh not so, &c.

D. Pedro. By my troth, a good song.

Balth. And an ill singer, my lord.

D. Pedro. Ha? no; no, faith; thou singest well enough for a shift.

Bene. [*Aside.*] An he had been a dog, that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him: and, I pray God, his bad voice bode no mischief! I had as lief have heard the night-raven, come what plague could have come after it.

D. Pedro. Yea, marry; [*To* CLAUDIO.]—Dost thou hear, Balthazar? I pray thee, get us some ex-

[8] Longer.

cellent musick; for to-morrow night we would have it at the lady Hero's chamber-window.

Balth. The best I can, my lord.

D. Pedro. Do so: farewell. [*Exeunt* BALTHAZAR *and musick.*] Come hither, Leonato: What was it you told me of to-day? that your niece Beatrice was in love with signior Benedick?

Claud. O, ay:—Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits. [*Aside to* PEDRO.] I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

Leon. No, nor I neither; but most wonderful, that she should so dote on signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

Bene. Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner? [*Aside.*

Leon. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it; but that she loves him with an enraged affection,—it is past the infinite of thought.[9]

D. Pedro. May be, she doth but counterfeit.

Claud. 'Faith, like enough.

Leon. O God! counterfeit! There never was counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion, as she discovers it.

D. Pedro. Why, what effects of passion shows she?

Claud. Bait the hook well; this fish will bite. [*Aside.*

Leon. What effects, my lord! She will sit you,—You heard my daughter tell you how.

Claud. She did, indeed.

D. Pedro. How, how, I pray you? You amaze

[9] Beyond the power of thought to conceive.

me: I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

Leon. I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

Bene. [*Aside.*] I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot, sure, hide itself in such reverence.

Claud. He hath ta'en the infection; hold it up. [*Aside.*

D. Pedro. Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

Leon. No; and swears she never will: that's her torment.

Claud. 'Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says: *Shall I,* says she, *that have so oft encounter'd him with scorn, write to him that I love him?*

Leon. This says she now when she is beginning to write to him: for she'll be up twenty times a night; and there will she sit in her smock, till she have writ a sheet of paper:—my daughter tells us all.

Claud. Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

Leon. O!—When she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice between the sheet?—

Claud. That.

Leon. O! she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence; railed at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her: *I measure him,* says she, *by my own spirit; for I should flout him, if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should.*

Claud. Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses;—*O sweet Benedick! God give me patience!*

Leon. She doth indeed; my daughter says so: and the ecstasy[1] hath so much overborne her, that my daughter is sometime afraid she will do a desperate outrage to herself; It is very true.

D. Pedro. It were good, that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

Claud. To what end? He would but make a sport of it, and torment the poor lady worse.

D. Pedro. An he should, it were an alms to hang him: She's an excellent sweet lady; and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

Claud. And she is exceeding wise.

D. Pedro. In every thing, but in loving Benedick.

Leon. O my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one, that blood hath the victory. I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

D. Pedro. I would, she had bestowed this dotage on me; I would have daff'd[2] all other respects, and made her half myself: I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what he will say.

Leon. Were it good, think you?

Claud. Hero thinks surely, she will die: for she says, she will die if he love her not; and she will die ere she makes her love known; and she will die if he woo her, rather than she will 'bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

D. Pedro. She doth well: if she should make

[1] Alienation of mind. [2] Thrown off.

tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible[3] spirit.

Claud. He is a very proper[4] man.

D. Pedro. He hath, indeed, a good outward happiness.

Claud. 'Fore God, and in my mind, very wise.

D. Pedro. He doth, indeed, show some sparks that are like wit.

Leon. And I take him to be valiant.

D. Pedro. As Hector, I assure you: and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise; for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most christian-like fear.

Leon. If he do fear God, he must necessarily keep peace; if he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

D. Pedro. And so will he do; for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him, by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece: Shall we go see Benedick, and tell him of her love?

Claud. Never tell him, my lord; let her wear it out with good counsel.

Leon. Nay, that's impossible; she may wear her heart out first.

D. Pedro. Well, we'll hear further of it by your daughter; let it cool the while. I love Benedick well; and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

Leon. My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

[3] Contemptuous. [4] Handsome.

Claud. If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation. [*Aside.*

D. Pedro. Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewoman carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter; that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt Don* PEDRO, CLAUDIO, *and* LEONATO.

BENEDICK *advances from the arbour.*

Bene. This can be no trick: The conference was sadly borne.[5]—They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady; it seems, her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say, I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too, that she will rather die than give any sign of affection.—I did never think to marry:—I must not seem proud:—Happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. They say, the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness: and virtuous;—'tis so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving me:—By my troth, it is no addition to her wit;—nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her.—I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage:—But doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth,

[5] Seriously carried on.

that he cannot endure in his age: Shall quips, and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? No: The world must be peopled. When I said, I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.—Here comes Beatrice: By this day, she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

Enter BEATRICE.

Beat. Against my will, I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

Bene. Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

Beat. I took no more pains for those thanks, than you take pains to thank me; if it had been painful, I would not have come.

Bene. You take pleasure in the message?

Beat. Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal:—You have no stomach, signior; fare you well. [*Exit.*

Bene. Ha! *Against my will I am sent to bid you come to dinner*—there's a double meaning in that. *I took no more pains for those thanks, than you took pains to thank me*—that's as much as to say, Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks:—If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew: I will go get her picture. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. Leonato's *Garden.*

Enter HERO, MARGARET, *and* URSULA.

Hero. Good Margaret, run thee into the parlour;
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
Proposing[6] with the Prince and Claudio:
Whisper her ear, and tell her, I and Ursula
Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her; say, that thou overheard'st us;
And bid her steal into the pleached bower,
Where honey-suckles, ripen'd by the sun,
Forbid the sun to enter;—like favourites,
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against that power that bred it:—there will she hide her,
To listen our propose: This is thy office,
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

Marg. I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently. [*Exit.*

Hero. Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley up and down,
Our talk must only be of Benedick:
When I do name him, let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit:
My talk to thee must be, how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice: Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay. Now begin;

[6] Discoursing.

Enter BEATRICE, *behind.*

For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.
Urs. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait:
So angle we for Beatrice; who even now
Is couched in the woodbine coverture:
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.
Hero. Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.—
[*They advance to the bower.*
No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful;
I know, her spirits are as coy and wild
As haggards of the rock.[7]
Urs. But are you sure,
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?
Hero. So says the prince, and my new-trothed lord.
Urs. And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?
Hero. They did entreat me to acquaint her of it:
But I persuaded them, if they lov'd Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.
Urs. Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full, as fortunate a bed,
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?
Hero. O God of love! I know, he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man:
But nature never fram'd a woman's heart

[7] A species of hawks.

Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice:
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising[8] what they look on; and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak: she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endeared.

Urs. Sure, I think so;
And therefore, certainly, it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

Hero. Why, you speak truth: I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd,
But she would spell him backward: if fair-faced,
She'd swear, the gentleman should be her sister;
If black, why, nature, drawing of an antick,
Made a foul blot: if tall, a lance ill-headed;
If low, an agate very vilely cut:
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all wind:
If silent, why a block moved with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out;
And never gives to truth and virtue, that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

Urs. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

Hero. No: not to be so odd, and from all fashions,
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable:
But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She'd mock me into air; O, she would laugh me
Out of myself, press me to death with wit.
Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly:

[8] Undervaluing.

It were a better death than die with mocks;
Which is as bad as die with tickling.

Urs. Yet tell her of it; hear what she will say.

Hero. No; rather I will go to Benedick,
And counsel him to fight against his passion:
And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with: One doth not know,
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

Urs. O, do not do your cousin such a wrong.
She cannot be so much without true judgment,
(Having so swift[9] and excellent a wit,
As she is priz'd to have,) as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as signior Benedick.

Hero. He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

Urs. I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy; signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument,[1] and valour,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.

Hero. Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

Urs. His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.—
When are you married, madam?

Hero. Why, every day;—to-morrow: Come, go in;
I'll show thee some attires; and have thy counsel,
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

Urs. She's lim'd[2] I warrant you; we have caught her, madam.

Hero. If it prove so, then loving goes by haps:
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.

[*Exeunt* HERO *and* URSULA.

[9] Ready. [1] Conversation. [2] Ensnared with birdlime.

BEATRICE *advances.*

Beat. What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And, Benedick, love on, I will requite thee;
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand;
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band:
For others say, thou dost deserve; and I
Believe it better than reportingly. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Room in Leonato's *House.*

Enter Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, *and* LEONATO.

D. Pedro. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then I go toward Arragon.

Claud. I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

D. Pedro. Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage, as to show a child his new coat, and forbid him to wear it. I will only be bold with Benedick for his company; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth; he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him: he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue

is the clapper; for what his heart thinks, his tongue speaks.

Bene. Gallants, I am not as I have been.

Leon. So say I; methinks, you are sadder.

Claud. I hope, he be in love.

D. Pedro. Hang him, truant; there's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touch'd with love: if he be sad, he wants money.

Bene. I have the tooth-ach.

D. Pedro. Draw it.

Bene. Hang it!

Claud. You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

D. Pedro. What? sigh for the tooth-ach?

Leon. Where is but a humour, or a worm?

Bene. Well, Every one can master a grief, but he that has it.

Claud. Yet say I, he is in love.

D. Pedro. There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises; as, to be a Dutchman to-day; a Frenchman to-morrow; or in the shape of two countries at once, as, a German from the waist downward, all slops;[3] and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet: Unless he have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is.

Claud. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs: he brushes his hat o' mornings; What should that bode?

D. Pedro. Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

[3] Large loose breeches.

Claud. No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him; and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis-balls.

Leon. Indeed, he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

D. Pedro. Nay, he rubs himself with civet: Can you smell him out by that?

Claud. That's as much as to say, The sweet youth's in love.

D. Pedro. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

Claud. And when was he wont to wash his face?

D. Pedro. Yea, or to paint himself? for the which, I hear what they say of him.

Claud. Nay, but his jesting spirit; which is now crept into a lutestring, and now governed by stops.

D. Pedro. Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him: Conclude, conclude, he is in love.

Claud. Nay, but I know who loves him.

D. Pedro. That would I know too; I warrant, one that knows him not.

Claud. Yes, and his ill conditions; and, in despite of all, dies for him.

D. Pedro. She shall be buried with her face upwards.

Bene. Yet is this no charm for the tooth-ach.—Old signior, walk aside with me: I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear.

[*Exeunt* BENEDICK *and* LEONATO.

D. Pedro. For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

Claud. 'Tis even so: Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice; and then the two bears will not bite one another, when they meet.

Enter Don JOHN.

D. John. My lord and brother, God save you.

D. Pedro. Good den, brother.

D. John. If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

D. Pedro. In private?

D. John. If it please you;—yet count Claudio may hear; for what I would speak of, concerns him.

D. Pedro. What's the matter?

D. John. Means your lordship to be married to-morrow? [*To* CLAUDIO.

D. Pedro. You know, he does.

D. John. I know not that, when he knows what I know.

Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you, discover it.

D. John. You may think, I love you not; let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest: For my brother, I think, he holds you well; and in dearness of heart hath holp to effect your ensuing marriage: surely, suit ill spent, and labour ill bestowed!

D. Pedro. Why, what's the matter?

D. John. I came hither to tell you; and, circumstances shortened, (for she hath been too long a talking of,) the lady is disloyal.

Claud. Who? Hero?

D. John. Even she; Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

Claud. Disloyal?

D. John. The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say, she were worse; think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber-window entered; even the night before her wedding-day: if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be so?

D. Pedro. I will not think it.

D. John. If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know: if you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more, and heard more, proceed accordingly.

Claud. If I see any thing to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow; in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

D. Pedro. And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

D. John. I will disparage her no farther, till you are my witnesses: bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

D. Pedro. O day untowardly turned!

Claud. O mischief strangely thwarting!

D. John. O plague right well prevented!
So will you say, when you have seen the sequel.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Street.

Enter DOGBERRY *and* VERGES, *with the* Watch.

Dogb. Are you good men and true?

Verg. Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

Dogb. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

Verg. Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

Dogb. First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable?

1 *Watch.* Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal; for they can write and read.

Dogb. Come hither, neighbour Seacoal. God hath blessed you with a good name: to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.

2 *Watch.* Both which, master constable,——

Dogb. You have; I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern: This is your charge; You shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

2 *Watch.* How if he will not stand?

Dogb. Why then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

Verg. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

Dogb. True, and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects:—You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and talk, is most tolerable and not to be endured.

2 *Watch.* We will rather sleep than talk; we know what belongs to a watch.

Dogb. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only, have a care that your bills[4] be not stolen:—Well, you are to call at all the alehouses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

2 *Watch.* How if they will not?

Dogb. Why then, let them alone till they are sober; if they make you not then the better answer, you may say, they are not the men you took them for.

2 *Watch.* Well, sir.

Dogb. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man: and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

2 *Watch.* If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

Dogb. Truly, by your office, you may; but, I think, they that touch pitch will be defiled: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief,

[4] Weapons of the watchmen.

is, to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

Verg. You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

Dogb. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will; much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

Verg. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse, and bid her still it.

2 *Watch.* How if the nurse be asleep, and will not hear us.

Dogb. Why then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying: for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes, will never answer a calf when he bleats.

Verg. 'Tis very true.

Dogb. This is the end of the charge. You, constable, are to present the prince's own person; if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

Verg. Nay by'r lady, that, I think, he cannot.

Dogb. Five shillings to one on't, with any man that knows the statues, he may stay him: marry, not without the prince be willing: for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

Verg. By'r lady, I think, it be so,

Dogb. Ha, ha, ha! Well, masters, good night: an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own, and good night.—Come, neighbour.

2 *Watch.* Well, masters, we hear our charge: let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to-bed.

Dogb. One word more, honest neighbours: I pray you, watch about signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night: Adieu, be vigitant, I beseech you.

[*Exeunt* DOGBERRY *and* VERGES.

Enter BORACHIO *and* CONRADE.

Bora. What! Conrade,—

Watch. Peace, stir not. [*Aside.*

Bora. Conrade, I say!

Con. Here, man, I am at thy elbow.

Bora. Mass, and my elbow itched; I thought, there would a scab follow.

Con. I will owe thee an answer for that; and now forward with thy tale.

Bora. Stand thee close then under this pent-house, for it drizzles rain; and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

Watch. [*Aside.*] Some treason, masters; yet stand close.

Bora. Therefore know, I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

Con. Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?

Bora. Thou should'st rather ask, if it were possible any villainy should be so rich; for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

Con. I wonder at it.

Bora. That shows, thou art unconfirmed:[5] Thou knowest, that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

[5] Unpractised in the ways of the world.

Con. Yes, it is apparel.

Bora. I mean, the fashion.

Con. Yes, the fashion is the fashion.

Bora. Tush! I may as well say, the fool's the fool. But see'st thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?

Watch. I know that Deformed; he has been a vile thief this seven year; he goes up and down like a gentleman: I remember his name.

Bora. Didst thou not hear somebody?

Con. No; 'twas the vane on the house.

Bora. Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily he turns about all the hot bloods, between fourteen and five and thirty? sometime, fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy[6] painting; sometime, like god Bel's priests in the old church window; sometime, like the shaven Hercules in the smirched[7] worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-piece seems as massy as his club?

Con. All this I see; and see, that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man: But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

Bora. Not so neither: but know, that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero; she leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night,—I tell this tale vilely:—I should first tell thee, how the Prince, Claudio, and my master, planted, and placed, and possessed by my master Don

[6] Smoked. [7] Soiled.

John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

Con. And thought they, Margaret was Hero?

Bora. Two of them did, the Prince and Claudio; but the devil my master knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villainy, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged; swore he would meet her as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw over-night, and send her home again without a husband.

1 *Watch.* We charge you in the prince's name, stand.

2 *Watch.* Call up the right master constable: We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

1 *Watch.* And one Deformed is one of them; I know him, he wears a lock.

Con. Masters, masters.

2 *Watch.* You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

Con. Masters,—

1 *Watch.* Never speak; we charge you, let us obey you to go with us.

Bora. We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills.

Con. A commodity in question, I warrant you. Come, we'll obey you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Room in Leonato's *House.*

Enter HERO, MARGARET, *and* URSULA.

Hero. Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

Urs. I will, lady.

Hero. And bid her come hither.

Urs. Well. [*Exit* URSULA.

Marg. Troth, I think, your other rabato[8] were better.

Hero. No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

Marg. By my troth, it's not so good; and I warrant, your cousin will say so.

Hero. My cousin's a fool, and thou art another; I'll wear none but this.

Marg. I like the new tire[9] within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner: and your gown's a most rare fashion, i'faith. I saw the duchess of Milan's gown, that they praise so.

Hero. O, that exceeds, they say.

Marg. By my troth it's but a night-gown in respect of yours: Cloth of gold, and cuts, and laced with silver; set with pearls, down sleeves, side-sleeves,[1] and skirts round, underborne with a blueish tinsel: but for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

[8] A kind of ruff. [9] Head-dress.

[1] Long-sleeves.

Hero. God give me joy to wear it, for my heart is exceeding heavy!

Marg. 'Twill be heavier soon, by the weight of a man.

Hero. Fye upon thee! art not ashamed?

Marg. Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think, you would have me say, saving your reverence,—*a husband:* an bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend nobody: Is there any harm in—*the heavier for a husband?* None, I think, an it be the right husband, and the right wife; otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy: Ask my lady Beatrice else, here she comes.

Enter BEATRICE.

Hero. Good morrow, coz.

Beat. Good morrow, sweet Hero.

Hero. Why, how now! do you speak in the sick tune?

Beat. I am out of all other tune, methinks.

Marg. Clap us into—*Light o' love;* that goes without burden; do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

Beat. Yea, *Light o' love,* with your heels!—then if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barns.

Marg. O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels.

Beat. 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin; 'tis time you were ready. By my troth I am exceeding ill: —hey ho!

Marg. For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?

Beat. For the letter that begins them all, H.[2]

Marg. Well, an you be not turned Turk, there's no more sailing by the star.

Beat. What means the fool, trow?

Marg. Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire!

Hero. These gloves the count sent me, they are an excellent perfume.

Beat. I am stuffed, cousin, I cannot smell.

Marg. A maid, and stuffed! there's goodly catching of cold.

Beat. O, God help me! God help me! how long have you profess'd apprehension?

Marg. Ever since you left it: doth not my wit become me rarely?

Beat. It is not seen enough, you should wear it in your cap.—By my troth, I am sick.

Marg. Get you some of this distilled Carduus Benedictus, and lay it to your heart; it is the only thing for a qualm.

Hero. There thou prick'st her with a thistle.

Beat. Benedictus! why Benedictus? you have some moral[3] in this Benedictus.

Marg. Moral? no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning; I meant, plain holy-thistle. You may think, perchance, that I think you are in love: nay, by'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list; nor I list not to think what I can; nor, indeed, I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love: yet Benedick

[2] *i. e.* for an *ache* or pain. [3] Hidden meaning.

was such another, and now is he become a man: he swore he would never marry; and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging: and how you may be converted, I know not; but methinks, you look with your eyes as other women do.

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

Marg. Not a false gallop.

Re-enter URSULA.

Urs. Madam, withdraw; the prince, the count, signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town, are come to fetch you to church.

Hero. Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Another Room in Leonato's *House.*

Enter LEONATO, *with* DOGBERRY *and* VERGES.

Leon. What would you with me, honest neighbour?

Dogb. Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you, that decerns you nearly.

Leon. Brief, I pray you; for you see, 'tis a busy time with me.

Dogb. Marry, this it is, sir.

Verg. Yes, in truth it is, sir.

Leon. What is it, my good friends?

Dogb. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter; an old man, sir, and his wits are not so

blunt, as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest, as the skin between his brows.

Verg. Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester than I.

Dogb. Comparisons are odorous: *palabras*, neighbour Verges.

Leon. Neighbours, you are tedious.

Dogb. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers; but, truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

Leon. All thy tediousness on me! ha!

Dogb. Yea, and 'twere a thousand times more than 'tis: for I hear as good exclamation on your worship, as of any man in the city; and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

Verg. And so am I.

Leon. I would fain know what you have to say.

Verg. Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, have ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

Dogb. A good old man, sir; he will be talking; as they say, When the age is in, the wit is out; God help us! it is a world to see![4]—Well said, i'faith, neighbour Verges:—well, God's a good man; an two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind:—An honest soul, i'faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread: but, God is to be worshipped: All men are not alike; alas good neighbour!

[4] It is worth seeing.

Leon. Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

Dogb. Gifts, that God gives.

Leon. I must leave you.

Dogb. One word, sir: our watch, sir, have, indeed, comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

Leon. Take their examination yourself, and bring it me; I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

Dogb. It shall be suffigance.

Leon. Drink some wine ere you go: fare you well.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband.

Leon. I will wait upon them; I am ready.

[*Exeunt* LEONATO *and* Messenger.

Dogb. Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacoal, bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the gaol; we are now to examination these men.

Verg. And we must do it wisely.

Dogb. We will spare for no wit, I warrant you; here's that [*Touching his forehead.*] shall drive some of them to a *non com:* only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the gaol. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. The Inside of a Church.

Enter Don PEDRO, *Don* JOHN, LEONATO, Friar, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, HERO, *and* BEATRICE, *&c.*

Leon. Come, friar Francis, be brief; only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

Friar. You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady?

Claud. No.

Leon. To be married to her, friar; you come to marry her.

Friar. Lady, you come hither to be married to this count?

Hero. I do.

Friar. If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

Claud. Know you any, Hero?

Hero. None, my lord.

Friar. Know you any, count?

Leon. I dare make his answer, none.

Claud. O, what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do! not knowing what they do!

Bene. How now! Interjections? Why, then some be of laughing, as, ha! ha! he?

Claud. Stand thee by, friar:—Father, by your leave!

Will you with free and unconstrained soul
Give me this maid, your daughter?
Leon. As freely, son, as God did give her me.
Claud. And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift.
D. Pedro. Nothing, unless you render her again.
Claud. Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.—
There, Leonato, take her back again;
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour:—
Behold, how like a maid she blushes here:
O, what authority and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal!
Comes not that blood, as modest evidence,
To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none:
She knows the heat of a luxurious[5] bed:
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.
Leon. What do you mean, my lord?
Claud. Not to be married,
Not knit my soul to an approved wanton.
Leon. Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof
Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth,
And made defeat of her virginity,——
Claud. I know what you would say; If I have known her,
You'll say, she did embrace me as a husband,
And so extenuate the 'forehand sin:

[5] Lascivious.

No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large;[6]
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd
Bashful sincerity, and comely love.
Hero. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?
Claud. Out on thy seeming! I will write against it;
You seem to me as Dian in her orb;
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals
That rage in savage sensuality.
Hero. Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?[7]
Leon. Sweet prince, why speak not you?
D. Pedro. What should I speak?
I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about
To link my dear friend to a common stale.
Leon. Are these things spoken? or do I but dream?
D. John. Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.
Bene. This looks not like a nuptial.
Hero. True, O God!
Claud. Leonato, stand I here?
Is this the prince? Is this the prince's brother?
Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own?
Leon. All this is so; But what of this, my lord?
Claud. Let me but move one question to your daughter;
And, by that fatherly and kindly power
That you have in her, bid her answer truly.
Leon. I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.

[6] Licentious. [7] Remote from the business in hand.

Hero. O God defend me! how am I beset!—
What kind of catechizing call you this?

Claud. To make you answer truly to your name.

Hero. Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?

Claud. Marry, that can Hero;
Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.
What man was he talk'd with you yesternight
Out at your window, betwixt twelve and one?
Now, if you are a maid, answer to this.

Hero. I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.

D. Pedro. Why, then are you no maiden.—Leonato,
I am sorry you must hear; Upon mine honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grieved count,
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night,
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window;
Who hath, indeed, most like a liberal[8] villain,
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret.

D. John. Fye, fye! they are
Not to be nam'd, my lord, not to be spoke of;
There is not chastity enough in language,
Without offence, to utter them: Thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.

Claud. O Hero! what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been placed
About thy thoughts, and counsels of thy heart!
But, fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell,
Thou pure impiety, and impious purity!
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,

[8] Too free of tongue.

And on my eye-lids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious.[9]

Leon. Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?
[HERO *swoons.*

Beat. Why, how now, cousin? wherefore sink you down?

D. John. Come, let us go: these things, come thus to light,
Smother her spirits up.

[*Exeunt Don* PEDRO, *Don* JOHN, *and* CLAUDIO.

Bene. How doth the lady?

Beat. Dead, I think;—help, uncle;—
Hero! why, Hero!—Uncle!—Signior Benedick!—friar!

Leon. O fate, take not away thy heavy hand!
Death is the fairest cover for her shame,
That may be wish'd for.

Beat. How now, cousin Hero?

Friar. Have comfort, lady.

Leon. Dost thou look up?

Friar. Yea; Wherefore should she not?

Leon. Wherefore? Why, doth not every earthly thing
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood?—
Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes:
For did I think thou would'st not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,

[9] Attractive.

Strike at thy life. Griev'd I, I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?[1]
O, one too much by thee! Why had I one?
Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?
Why had I not, with charitable hand,
Took up a beggar's issue at my gates;
Who smirched[2] thus, and mired with infamy,
I might have said, *No part of it is mine,*
This shame derives itself from unknown loins?
But mine, and mine I lov'd, and mine I prais'd,
And mine that I was proud on; mine so much,
That I myself was to myself not mine,
Valuing of her; why, she—O, she is fallen
Into a pit of ink! that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again;
And salt too little, which may season give
To her foul tainted flesh!

Bene. Sir, sir, be patient:
For my part, I am so attir'd in wonder,
I know not what to say.

Beat. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied!

Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

Beat. No, truly, not; although, until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.

Leon. Confirm'd, confirm'd! O, that is stronger made,
Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron!
Would the two princes lie? and Claudio lie?
Who lov'd her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears? Hence from her; let her die.

Friar. Hear me a little;

[1] Disposition of things. [2] Sullied.

For I have only been silent so long,
And given way unto this course of fortune,
By noting of the lady: I have mark'd
A thousand blushing apparitions start
Into her face; a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness bear away those blushes;
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire,
To burn the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth:—Call me a fool;
Trust not my reading, nor my observations,
Which with experimental seal doth warrant
The tenour of my book; trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
Under some biting error.

Leon. Friar, it cannot be:
Thou seest, that all the grace that she hath left,
Is, that she will not add to her damnation
A sin of perjury; she not denies it:
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse
That which appears in proper nakedness?

Friar. Lady, what man is he you are accus'd of?

Hero. They know, that do accuse me; I know none:
If I know more of any man alive,
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sins lack mercy!—O my father,
Prove you that any man with me convers'd
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

Friar. There is some strange misprision[3] in the princes.

[3] Misconception.

Bene. Two of them have the very bent of honour;
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John the bastard,
Whose spirits toil in frame of villainies.

Leon. I know not; If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention,
Nor fortune made such havock of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall find, awak'd in such a kind,
Both strength of limb, and policy of mind,
Ability in means, and choice of friends,
To quit me of them throughly.

Friar. Pause a while,
And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the princes left for dead;
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it, that she is dead indeed:
Maintain a mourning ostentation:
And on your family's old monument
Hang mournful epitaphs, and do all rites
That appertain unto a burial.

Leon. What shall become of this? What will this do?

Friar. Marry, this, well carried, shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse; that is some good:
But not for that, dream I on this strange course,
But on this travail look for greater birth.
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,
Shall be lamented, pitied and excus'd,
Of every hearer: For it so falls out,

That what we have we prize not to the worth,
Whiles[4] we enjoy it; but being lack'd and lost,
Why, then we rack[5] the value; then we find
The virtue, that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours:—So will it fare with Claudio:
When he shall hear she died upon[6] his words,
The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination;
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
More moving-delicate, and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
Than when she liv'd indeed:—then shall he mourn,
(If ever love had interest in his liver,)
And wish he had not so accused her;
No, though he thought his accusation true.
Let this be so, and doubt not but success
Will fashion the event in better shape
Than I can lay it down in likelihood.
But if all aim but this be levell'd false,
The supposition of the lady's death
Will quench the wonder of her infamy:
And, if it sort not well, you may conceal her
(As best befits her wounded reputation,)
In some reclusive and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

Bene. Signior Leonato, let the friar advise you:
And though, you know, my inwardness[7] and love
Is very much unto the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this

[4] While. [5] Over-rate. [6] By. [7] Intimacy.

As secretly, and justly, as your soul
Should with your body.

Leon. Being that I flow in grief,
The smallest twine may lead me.

Friar. 'Tis well consented; presently away;
For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.—
Come, lady, die to live: this wedding day,
Perhaps, is but prolong'd; have patience, and endure.

[*Exeunt* Friar, HERO, *and* LEONATO.

Bene. Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

Beat. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You have no reason, I do it freely.

Bene. Surely, I do believe your fair cousin is wrong'd.

Beat. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me, that would right her!

Bene. Is there any way to show such friendship?

Beat. A very even way, but no such friend.

Bene. May a man do it?

Beat. It is a man's office, but not yours.

Bene. I do love nothing in the world so well as you; Is not that strange?

Beat. As strange as the thing I know not: It were as possible for me to say, I loved nothing so well as you: but believe me not; and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing:—I am sorry for my cousin.

Bene. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

Beat. Do not swear by it, and eat it.

Bene. I will swear by it, that you love me; and I will make him eat it, that says, I love not you.

Beat. Will you not eat your word?

Bene. With no sauce that can be devised to it: I protest, I love thee.

Beat. Why then, God forgive me!

Bene. What offence, sweet Beatrice?

Beat. You have staid me in a happy hour; I was about to protest, I loved you.

Bene. And do it with all thy heart.

Beat. I love you with so much of my heart, that none is left to protest.

Bene. Come, bid me do any thing for thee.

Beat. Kill Claudio.

Bene. Ha! not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to deny it: Farewell.

Bene. Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

Beat. I am gone, though I am here;—There is no love in you:—Nay, I pray you, let me go.

Bene. Beatrice,—

Beat. In faith, I will go.

Bene. We'll be friends first.

Beat. You dare easier be friends with me, than fight with mine enemy.

Bene. Is Claudio thine enemy?

Beat. Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman?—O, that I were a man!—What! bear her in hand[3] until they come to take hands; and then with publick accusation, uncovered slander, unmiti-

[3] Delude her with hopes.

gated rancour,—O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.

Bene. Hear me, Beatrice;—

Beat. Talk with a man out at a window?—a proper saying!

Bene. Nay but, Beatrice;—

Beat. Sweet Hero!—she is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone.

Bene. Beat—

Beat. Princes, and counties![9] Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count-confect;[1] a sweet gallant, surely! O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies,[2] valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tells a lie, and swears it:—I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

Bene. Tarry, good Beatrice: By this hand, I love thee.

Beat. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

Bene. Think you in your soul the count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

Beat. Yea, as sure as I have a thought, or a soul.

Bene. Enough, I am engaged, I will challenge him; I will kiss your hand, and so leave you: By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account: As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort

[9] Noblemen.

[1] A nobleman made out of sugar.

[2] Ceremony.

your cousin: I must say, she is dead; and so, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Prison.

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, *and* Sexton, *in gowns; and the* Watch, *with* CONRADE *and* BORACHIO.

Dogb. Is our whole dissembly appeared?

Verg. O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton!

Sexton. Which be the malefactors?

Dogb. Marry, that am I and my partner.

Verg. Nay, that's certain; we have the exhibition to examine.

Sexton. But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before master constable.

Dogb. Yea, marry, let them come before me.—What is your name, friend?

Bora. Borachio.

Dogb. Pray write down—Borachio.——Yours, sirrah?

Con. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

Dogb. Write down—master gentleman Conrade.—Masters, do you serve God?

Con. Bora. Yea, sir, we hope.

Dogb. Write down—that they hope they serve God:—and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains!—Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

Con. Marry, sir, we say we are none.

Dogb. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him.—Come you hither, sirrah; a word in your ear, sir; I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

Bora. Sir, I say to you, we are none.

Dogb. Well, stand aside.—'Fore God, they are both in a tale: Have you writ down—that they are none?

Sexton. Master constable, you go not the way to examine; you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Dogb. Yea, marry, that's the eftest way:—Let the watch come forth:—Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

1 *Watch.* This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

Dogb. Write down—prince John a villain:—Why this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother—villain.

Bora. Master constable,—

Dogb. Pray thee, fellow, peace; I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

Sexton. What heard you him say else?

2 *Watch.* Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John, for accusing the lady Hero wrongfully.

Dogb. Flat burglary, as ever was committed.

Verg. Yea, by the mass, that it is.

Sexton. What else, fellow?

1 *Watch.* And that count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

Dogb. O villiain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.

Sexton. What else?

2 Watch. This is all.

Sexton. And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away; Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner refused, and upon the grief of this, suddenly died.—Master constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's; I will go before, and show him their examination. [*Exit.*

Dogb. Come, let them be opinioned.

Verg. Let them be in band.[3]

Con. Off, coxcomb!

Dogb. God's my life! where's the sexton? let him write down—the prince's officer, coxcomb.—Come, bind them:——Thou naughty varlet!

Con. Away! you are an ass, you are an ass.

Dogb. Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years?—O that he were here to write me down—an ass!—but, masters, remember, that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass:—No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a housholder: and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and every

[3] Bond.

thing handsome about him:—Bring him away. O, that I had been writ down—an ass. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. Before Leonato's *House.*

Enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO.

Ant. If you go on thus, you will kill yourself;
And 'tis not wisdom, thus to second grief
Against yourself.
Leon. I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve: give not me counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear,
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a father, that so lov'd his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience;
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain;
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form:
If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard;
Cry—sorrow, wag! and hem, when he should groan;
Patch grief with proverbs; make misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters; bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man: For, brother, men
Can counsel, and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before

Would give preceptial medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,
Charm ach with air, and agony with words:
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue, nor sufficiency,
To be so moral, when he shall endure
The like himself: therefore give me no counsel:
My griefs cry louder than advertisement.[4]

Ant. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leon. I pray thee, peace: I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher,
That could endure the tooth-ach patiently;
However they have writ the style of gods,
And made a pish at chance and sufferance.

Ant. Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
Make those, that do offend you, suffer too.

Leon. There thou speak'st reason: nay, I will do so:
My soul doth tell me, Hero is belied;
And that shall Claudio know, so shall the prince,
And all of them, that thus dishonour her.

Enter Don PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO.

Ant. Here comes the prince, and Claudio, hastily.

D. Pedro. Good den, good den.

Claud. Good day to both of you.

Leon. Hear you, my lords,—

D. Pedro. We have some haste, Leonato.

Leon. Some haste, my lord!—well, fare you well, my lord:—
Are you so hasty now?—well, all is one.

[4] Admonition.

D. Pedro. Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.

Ant. If he could right himself with quarreling,
Some of us would lie low.

Claud. Who wrongs him?

Leon. Marry,
Thou, thou dost wrong me; thou dissembler, thou:—
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword,
I fear thee not.

Claud. Marry, beshrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear:
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

Leon. Tush, tush, man, never fleer and jest at me:
I speak not like a dotard, nor a fool;
As, under privilege of age, to brag
What I have done being young, or what would do,
Were I not old: Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me,
That I am forc'd to lay my reverence by;
And, with grey hairs, and bruise of many days,
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.
I say, thou hast belied mine innocent child;
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lyes buried with her ancestors:
O! in a tomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of her's fram'd by thy villainy.

Claud. My villainy!

Leon. Thine, Claudio; thine I say.

D. Pedro. You say not right, old man.

Leon. My lord, my lord,
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare?

Despite his nice fence, and his active practice,[5]
His May of youth, and bloom of lustyhood.
Claud. Away, I will not have to do with you.
Leon. Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast kill'd my child;
If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.
Ant. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed:
But that's no matter; let him kill one first;—
Win me and wear me,—let him answer me,—
Come, follow me, boy; come, boy, follow me:
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining[6] fence;
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.
Leon. Brother,—
Ant. Content yourself: God knows, I lov'd my niece;
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains;
That dare as well answer a man, indeed,
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue:
Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops!—
Leon. Brother Antony,—
Ant. Hold you content; What, man! I know them, yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple:
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-mong'ring boys,
That lie, and cog, and flout, deprave and slander,
Go antickly, and show outward hideousness,
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst,
And this is all.
Leon. But, brother Antony,—

[5] Skill in fencing. [6] Thrusting.

Ant. Come, 'tis no matter;
Do not you meddle, let me deal in this.

D. Pedro. Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience.
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death;
But, on my honour, she was charg'd with nothing
But what was true, and very full of proof.

Leon. My lord, my lord,—

D. Pedro. I will not hear you.

Leon. No?
Brother, away:—I will be heard;—

Ant. And shall,
Or some of us will smart for it.

[*Exeunt* LEONATO *and* ANTONIO.

Enter BENEDICK.

D. Pedro. See, see; here comes the man we went to seek.

Claud. Now, signior! what news!

Bene. Good day, my lord.

D. Pedro. Welcome, signior: You are almost come to part almost a fray.

Claud. We had like to have had our two noses snapped off with two old men without teeth.

D. Pedro. Leonato and his brother: What think'st thou? Had we fought, I doubt, we should have been too young for them.

Bene. In a false quarrel there is no true valour. I came to seek you both.

Claud. We have been up and down to seek thee; for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away: Wilt thou use thy wit?

Bene. It is in my scabbard; Shall I draw it?

D. Pedro. Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

Claud. Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit.—I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels; draw, to pleasure us.

D. Pedro. As I am an honest man, he looks pale: —Art thou sick, or angry?

Claud. What! courage, man! What though care killed a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

Bene. Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, an you charge it against me:—I pray you, choose, another subject.

Claud. Nay, then give him another staff; this last was broke cross.

D. Pedro. By this light, he changes more and more; I think, he be angry indeed.

Claud. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.[7]

Bene. Shall I speak a word in your ear?

Claud. God bless me from a challenge!

Bene. You are a villain;—I jest not:—I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare:—Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you: Let me hear from you.

Claud. Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

D. Pedro. What, a feast? a feast?

Claud. I'faith, I thank him; he hath bid[8] me to a calf's-head and a capon; the which if I do not

[7] To give a challenge. [8] Invited.

carve most curiously, say, my knife's naught.—Shall I not find a woodcock too?

Bene. Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

D. Pedro. I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy wit the other day: I said, thou hadst a fine wit; *True,* says she, *a fine little one: No,* said I, *a great wit; Right,* says she, *a great gross one: Nay,* said I, *a good wit; Just,* said she, *it hurts nobody: Nay,* said I, *the gentleman is wise; Certain,* said she, *a wise gentleman: Nay,* said I, *he hath the tongues; That I believe,* said she, *for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning; there's a double tongue; there's two tongues.* Thus did she, an hour together, transshape thy particular virtues; yet, at last, she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in Italy.

Claud. For the which she wept heartily, and said, she cared not.

D. Pedro. Yea, that she did; but yet, for all that, an if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly: the old man's daughter told us all.

Claud. All, all; and moreover, *God saw him when he was hid in the garden.*

D. Pedro. But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

Claud. Yea, and text underneath, *Here dwells Benedick the married man?*

Bene. Fare you well, boy; you know my mind; I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour: you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not.—My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you: I must discontinue your

company: your brother, the bastard is fled from Messina: you have, among you, killed a sweet and innocent lady: For my lord Lack-beard, there, he and I shall meet; and till then, peace be with him.

[*Exit* BENEDICK.

D. Pedro. He is in earnest.

Claud. In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

D. Pedro. And hath challenged thee?

Claud. Most sincerely.

D. Pedro. What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit!

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, *and the* Watch, *with* CONRADE *and* BORACHIO.

Claud. He is then a giant to an ape: but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.

D. Pedro. But, soft you, let be; pluck up, my heart, and be sad![9] Did he not say, my brother was fled?

Dogb. Come, you, sir; if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance: nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be looked to.

D. Pedro. How now, two of my brother's men bound! Borachio, one!

Claud. Hearken after their offence, my lord!

D. Pedro. Officers, what offence have these men done?

Dogb. Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; se-

[9] Serious.

condarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things: and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

D. Pedro. First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Claud. Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited.

D. Pedro. Whom have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood: What's your offence?

Bora. Sweet prince, let me go no further to mine answer; do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light; who, in the night, over-heard me confessing to this man, how Don John your brother incensed[1] me to slander the lady Hero; how you were brought into the orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garment; how you disgraced her, when you should marry her: my villainy they have upon record; which I had rather seal with my death, than repeat over to my shame: the lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

D. Pedro. Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

Claud. I have drunk poison, whiles he utter'd it.

D. Pedro. But did my brother set thee on to this?

[1] Incited.

Bora. Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

D. Pedro. He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery:—
And fled he is upon this villainy.

Claud. Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that I loved it first.

Dogb. Come, bring away the plaintiffs; by this time our Sexton hath reformed signior Leonato of the matter: And masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

Verg. Here, here comes master signior Leonato, and the Sexton too.

Re-enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO, *with the* Sexton.

Leon. Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes;
That when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him: Which of these is he?

Bora. If you would know your wronger look on me.

Leon. Art thou the slave, that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?

Bora. Yea, even I alone.

Leon. No, not so, villain; thou bely'st thyself;
Here stand a pair of honourable men,
A third is fled, that had a hand in it:—
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death;
Record it with your high and worthy deeds;
'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

Claud. I know not how to pray your patience,
Yet I must speak: Choose your revenge yourself;

Impose[2] me to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sin: yet sinn'd I not,
But in mistaking.

D. Pedro. By my soul, nor I;
And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
I would bend under any heavy weight
That he'll enjoin me to.

Leon. I cannot bid you bid my daughter live,
That were impossible; but, I pray you both,
Possess[3] the people in Messina here
How innocent she died: and, if your love
Can labour aught in sad invention,
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb,
And sing it to her bones; sing it to night:—
To-morrow morning come you to my house;
And since you could not be my son-in-law,
Be yet my nephew: my brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copy of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us;
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.

Claud. O, noble sir,
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me!
I do embrace your offer; and dispose
For henceforth of poor Claudio.

Leon. To-morrow then I will expect your coming;
To-night I take my leave.—This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who, I believe, was pack'd[4] in all this wrong,
Hir'd to it by your brother.

Bora. No, by my soul, she was not;

[2] Command. [3] Acquaint. [4] Combined.

Nor knew not what she did, when she spoke to me;
But always hath been just and virtuous,
In any thing that I do know by her.

Dogb. Moreover, sir, (which, indeed, is not under white and black,) this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass: I beseech you, let it be remembered in his punishment: And also, the watch heard them talk of one Deformed: they say, he wears a key in his ear, and a lock hanging by it; and borrows money in God's name; the which he hath used so long, and never paid, that now men grow hard-hearted, and will lend nothing for God's sake: Pray you, examine him upon that point.

Leon. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

Dogb. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth; and I praise God for you.

Leon. There's for thy pains.

Dogb. God save the foundation!

Leon. Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.

Dogb. I leave an arrant knave with your worship; which, I beseech your worship, to correct yourself, for the example of others. God keep your worship; I wish your worship well; God restore you to health: I humbly give you leave to depart; and if a merry meeting may be wished, God prohibit it.—Come, neighbour.

[*Exeunt* DOGBERRY, VERGES, *and* Watch.

Leon. Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell.

Ant. Farewell, my lords; we look for you to-morrow.

D. Pedro. We will not fail.

Claud. To-night I'll mourn with Hero.

[*Exeunt Don* PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO.

Leon. Bring you these fellows on; we'll talk with Margaret,
How her acquaintance grew with this lewd[5] fellow.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Leonato's *Garden.*

Enter BENEDICK *and* MARGARET, *meeting.*

Bene. Pray thee, sweet mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands, by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

Marg. Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

Bene. In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it.

Marg. To have no man come over me? why, shall I always keep below stairs?

Bene. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth, it catches.

Marg. And your's as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

Bene. A most manly wit, Margaret, it will not hurt a woman; and so, I pray thee, call Beatrice: I give thee the bucklers.

Marg. Give us the swords, we have bucklers of our own.

[5] Ignorant.

Bene. If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice; and they are dangarous weapons for maids.

Marg. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who, I think, hath legs. [*Exit* MARGARET.

Bene. And therefore will come.

The god of love. [Singing.]
That sits above,
And knows me, and knows me,
How pitiful I deserve,—

I mean, in singing; but in loving,—Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of pandars, and a whole book full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turned over and over as my poor self, in love: Marry, I cannot show it in rhyme; I have tried; I can find out no rhyme to *lady* but *baby*, an innocent rhyme; for *scorn, horn*, a hard rhyme; for *school, fool*, a babbling rhyme; very ominous endings: No, I was not born under a rhyming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms.[6]—

Enter BEATRICE.

Sweet Beatrice, would'st thou come when I called thee?

Beat. Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me.

Bene. O, stay but till then!

Beat. *Then*, is spoken; fare you well now:—and yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came for, which

[6] Holiday phrases.

is, with knowing what hath passed between you and Claudio.

Bene. Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

Beat. Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome; therefore I will depart unkissed.

Bene. Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit. But, I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes[7] my challenge; and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

Beat. For them all together; which maintained so politick a state of evil, that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

Bene. *Suffer love;* a good epithet! I do suffer love, indeed, for I love thee against my will.

Beat. In spite of your heart, I think; alas! poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours; for I will never love that which my friend hates.

Bene. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

Beat. It appears not in this confession: there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

Bene. An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours: if a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no

[7] Is subject to.

longer in monument, than the bell rings, and the widow weeps.

Beat. And how long is that, think you?

Bene. Question?—Why, an hour in clamour, and a quarter in rheum: Therefore it is most expedient for the wise, (if Don Worm his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary,) to be the trumpet of of his own virtues, as I am to myself: So much for praising myself, (who, I myself will bear witness, is praise-worthy,) and now tell me, How doth your cousin?

Beat. Very ill.

Bene. And how do you.

Beat. Very ill too.

Bene. Serve God, love me, and mend: there will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Enter URSULA.

Urs. Madam, you must come to your uncle; yonder's old coil[8] at home: it is proved, my lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the Prince and Claudio mightily abused; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone: will you come presently?

Beat. Will you go hear this news, signior?

Bene. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes; and, moreover, I will go with thee to thy uncle's. [*Exeunt.*

[8] Stir.

SCENE III.

The Inside of a Church.

Enter Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, *and attendants, with musick and tapers.*

Claud. Is this the monument of Leonato?

Atten. It is, my lord.

Claud. [*Reads from a scroll.*]

Done to death by slanderous tongues
Was the Hero that here lies;
Death, in guerdon[9] *of her wrongs*
Gives her fame which never dies:
So the life, that died with shame,
Lives in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there upon the tomb, [affixing it.
Praising her when I am dumb.—

Now, musick, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

SONG.

Pardon, Goddess of the night,
Those that slew thy virgin knight;
For the which, with songs of woe,
Round about her tomb they go.
Midnight, assist our moan;
Help us to sigh and groan,
Heavily, heavily:
Graves, yawn, and yield your dead,
Till death be uttered,
Heavily, heavily.

9 Reward.

Claud. Now, unto thy bones good night!
Yearly will I do this rite.

D. Pedro. Good morrow, masters; put your torches out:
The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of gray:
Thanks to you all, and leave us; fare you well.

Claud. Good morrow, masters; each his several way.

D. Pedro. Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds;
And then to Leonato's we will go.

Claud. And, Hymen, now with luckier issue speed's,
Than this, for whom we render'd up this woe!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Room in Leonato's *House.*

Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, BENEDICK, BEATRICE, URSULA, Friar, *and* HERO.

Friar. Did I not tell you she was innocent?

Leon. So are the prince and Claudio, who accus'd her,
Upon the error that you heard debated:
But Margaret was in some fault for this;
Although against her will, as it appears
In the true course of all the question.

Ant. Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.

Bene. And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

Leon. Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves;
And, when I send for you, come hither mask'd:
The prince and Claudio promis'd by this hour
To visit me:—You know your office, brother;
You must be father to your brother's daughter,
And give her to young Claudio. [*Exeunt Ladies.*

Ant. Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.

Bene. Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

Friar. To do what, signior?

Bene. To bind me, or undo me, one of them.—
Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.

Leon. That eye my daughter lent her; 'Tis most true.

Bene. And I do with an eye of love requite her.

Leon. The sight whereof, I think, you had from me,
From Claudio, and the prince; But what's your will?

Bene. Your answer, sir, is enigmatical:
But, for my will, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd
In the estate of honourable marriage;—
In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.

Leon. My heart is with your liking.

Friar. And my help.
Here comes the prince, and Claudio.

Enter Don PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO, *with Attendants.*

D. Pedro. Good morrow to this fair assembly.

Leon. Good morrow, prince; good morrow, Claudio;
We here attend you; are you yet determin'd
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?

Claud. I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiope.

Leon. Call her forth, brother, here's the friar ready.

[*Exit* ANTONIO.

D. Pedro. Good morrow, Benedick: Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness?

Claud. I think, he thinks upon the savage bull:—
Tush, fear not, man, we'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee;
As once Europa did at lusty Jove,
When he would play the noble beast in love.

Bene. Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low;
And some such strange bull leap'd your father's cow,
And got a calf in that same noble feat,
Much like to you, for you have just his bleat.

Re-enter ANTONIO, *with the Ladies masked.*

Claud. For this I owe you: here comes other reckonings.
Which is the lady I must seize upon?

Ant. This same is she, and I do give you her.

Claud. Why, then she's mine: Sweet, let me see your face.

Leon. No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar, and swear to marry her.

Claud. Give me your hand before this holy friar;
I am your husband, if you like of me.

Hero. And when I lived, I was your other wife:

[*Unmasking.*

And when you loved, you were my other husband.

Claud. Another Hero?

Hero. Nothing certainer:
One Hero died defil'd; but I do live,
And, surely as I live, I am a maid.

D. Pedro. The former Hero! Hero that is dead!

Leon. She died, my lord, but whiles her slander lived.

Friar. All this amazement can I qualify;
When, after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death:
Mean time, let wonder seem familiar,
And to the chapel let us presently.

Bene. Soft and fair, friar.—Which is Beatrice?

Beat. I answer to that name; [*Unmasking.*] What is your will?

Bene. Do not you love me?

Beat. No, no more than reason.

Bene. Why, then your uncle, and the prince, and Claudio,
Have been deceived; for they swore you did.

Beat. Do you not love me?

Bene. No, no more than reason.

Beat. Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula,
Are much deceiv'd; for they did sware you did.

Bene. They swore that you were almost sick for me.

Beat. They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

Bene. 'Tis no such matter:—Then, you do not love me?

Beat. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

Leon. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

Claud. And I'll be sworn upon't, that he loves her;

For here's a paper, written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

Hero. And here's another,
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

Bene. A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts!—Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

Beat. I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion; and, partly, to save your life, for I was told you were in a consumption.

Bene. Peace, I will stop your mouth.—

[*Kissing her.*

D. Pedro. How dost thou, Benedick the married man?

Bene. I'll tell thee what, prince; a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour: Dost thou think, I care for a satire, or an epigram? No: if a man will be beaten with brains, he shall wear nothing handsome about him: In brief, since I do propose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion.—For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but in that[1] thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin.

Claud. I had well hoped, thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgelled thee out of thy

[1] Because.

single life, to make thee a double dealer; which, out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

Bene. Come, come, we are friends:—let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts, and our wives' heels.

Leon. We'll have dancing afterwards.

Bene. First, o' my word; therefore, play, musick.—Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife: there is no staff more reverend than one tipped with horn.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight,
And brought with armed men back to Messina.

Bene. Think not on him till to-morrow; I'll devise thee brave punishments for him.—Strike up, pipers.

[*Dance.*

[*Exeunt.*

This play may be justly said to contain two of the most sprightly characters that Shakspeare ever drew. The wit, the humourist, the gentleman, and the soldier, are combined in Benedick. It is to be lamented, indeed, that the first and most splendid of these distinctions, is disgraced by unnecessary profaneness; for the goodness of his heart is hardly sufficient to atone for the licence of his tongue. The too sarcastic levity, which flashes out in the conversation of Beatrice, may be excused on account of the steadiness and friendship so apparent in her behaviour, when she urges her lover to risque his life by a challenge to Claudio. In the conduct of the fable, however, there is an imperfection similar to that which Dr. Johnson has pointed out in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*:—the second contrivance is less ingenious than the first:—or, to speak more plainly, the same incident is be-

come stale by repetition. I wish some other method had been found to entrap Beatrice, then that very one which before had been successfully practised on Benedick.

Much Ado about Nothing, (as I understand from one of Mr. Vertue's MSS.) formerly passed under the title of Benedick and Beatrix. Heming the player received, on the 20th of May, 1613, the sum of forty pounds, and twenty pounds more as his Majesty's gratuity, for exhibiting six plays at Hampton Court, among which was this comedy.

STEEVENS.

A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

PERSONS PEPRESENTED.

Theseus, *Duke of Athens.*
Egeus, *Father to Hermia.*
Lysander, } *in love with Hermia.*
Demetrius, }
Philostrate, *Master of the Revels to Theseus.*
Quince, *the Carpenter.*
Snug, *the Joiner.*
Bottom, *the Weaver.*
Flute, *the Bellows-mender.*
Snout, *the Tinker.*
Starveling, *the Tailor.*

Hippolyta, *Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.*
Hermia, *Daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.*
Helena, *in love with Demetrius.*

Oberon, *King of the Fairies.*
Titania, *Queen of the Fairies.*
Puck, *or* Robin-goodfellow, *a Fairy.*
Peas-blossom, }
Cobweb, } *Fairies.*
Moth }
Mustard-seed, }
Pyramus, }
Thisbe, } *Characters in the Interlude performed by the Clowns.*
Wall, }
Moonshine, }
Lion, }

Other Fairies attending their King and Queen.
Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

SCENE, Athens, and a Wood not far from it.

MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Athens. A Room in the Palace of Theseus.

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, *and Attendants.*

Theseus.

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon: but, oh, methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes! she lingers my desires,
Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a young man's revenue.

Hip. Four days will quickly steep themselves in nights;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

The. Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth;
Turn melancholy forth to funerals,
The pale companion is not for our pomp.—
[*Exit* PHILOSTRATE.
Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,

And won thy love, doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph,[1] and with revelling.

Enter EGEUS, HERMIA, LYSANDER, *and* DEMETRIUS.

Ege. Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke!

The. Thanks, good Egeus: What's the news with thee?

Ege. Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia.—
Stand forth, Demetrius;—My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her:—
Stand forth, Lysander;—and, my gracious duke,
This hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child:
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,
And interchang'd love-tokens with my child:
Thou hast by moon-light at her window sung,
With feigning voice, verses of feigning love;
And stol'n the impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds,[2] conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweet-meats; messengers
Of strong prevailment in unharden'd youth:
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart;
Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,
To stubborn harshness:—And, my gracious duke,
Be it so she will not here before your grace
Consent to marry with Demetrius,
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens;
As she is mine, I may dispose of her:
Which shall be either to this gentleman,

[1] Shows. [2] Baubles.

Or to her death; according to our law,
Immediately provided in that case.
The. What say you, Hermia? be advis'd, fair maid:
To you your father should be as a god;
One that compos'd your beauties; yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax,
By him imprinted, and within his power
To leave the figure, or disfigure it.
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.
Her. So is Lysander.
The. In himself he is:
But, in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.
Her. I would, my father look'd but with my eyes.
The. Rather your eyes must with his judgement look.
Her. I do entreat your grace to pardon me.
I know not by what power I am made bold;
Nor how it may concern my modesty.
In such a presence here, to plead my thoughts:
But I beseech your grace that I may know
The worst that may befal me in this case,
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.
The. Either to die the death, or to abjure
For ever the society of men.
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires,
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,
Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,
You can endure the livery of a nun;
For aye[3] to be in shady cloister mew'd,
To live a barren sister all your life,

[3] Ever.

Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage:
But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,
Than that, which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

Her. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship, whose unwished yoke
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

The. Take time to pause: and, by the next new moon,
(The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,
For everlasting bond of fellowship,)
Upon that day either prepare to die,
For disobedience to your father's will;
Or else, to wed Demetrius, as he would:
Or on Diana's altar to protest,
For aye, austerity and single life.

Dem. Relent, sweet Hermia;—And, Lysander, yield
Thy crazed title to my certain right.

Lys. You have her father's love, Demetrius;
Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him.

Ege. Scornful Lysander! true, he hath my love;
And what is mine my love shall render him;
And she is mine; and all my right of her
I do estate unto Demetrius.

Lys. I am, my lord, as well deriv'd as he,
As well possess'd; my love is more than his;
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd,
If not with vantage, as Demetrius';

And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
I am belov'd of beauteous Hermia:
Why should not I then prosecute my right?
Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
And won her soul; and she sweet lady, dotes,
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
Upon this spotted[4] and inconstant man.

The. I must confess, that I have heard so much,
And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof;
But, being over-full of self-affairs,
My mind did lose it.—But, Demetrius, come;
And come, Egeus; you shall go with me,
I have some private schooling for you both.—
For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
To fit your fancies to your father's will;
Or else the law of Athens yields you up
(Which by no means we may extenuate,)
To death, or to a vow of single life.—
Come, my Hippolyta; What cheer, my love?—
Demetrius, and Egeus, go along:
I must employ you in some business
Against our nuptial; and confer with you
Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

Ege. With duty, and desire we follow you.

[*Exeunt* THES. HIP. EGE. DEM. *and train.*

Lys. How now, my love? Why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

Her. Belike, for want of rain; which I could well
Beteem them[5] from the tempest of mine eyes.

[4] Wicked. [5] Give, bestow.

Lys. Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth:
But, either it was different in blood;
Her. O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low!
Lys. Or else misgraffed, in respect of years;
Her. O spite! too old to be engag'd to young!
Lys. Or else it stood upon the choice of friends:
Her. O hell! to choose love by another's eye!
Lys. Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it;
Making it momentany[6] as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;
Brief as the lightning in the collied[7] night,
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,
And ere a man hath power to say,—Behold!
The jaws of darkness do devour it up:
So quick bright things come to confusion.
Her. If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,
It stands as an edict in destiny:
Then let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross;
As due to love, as thoughts, and dreams, and sighs,
Wishes, and tears, poor fancy's[8] followers.
Lys. A good persuasion; therefore, hear me, Hermia.
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child:
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues;
And she respects me as her only son.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;

[6] Momentary. [7] Black. [8] Loves.

And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us: If thou lov'st me then,
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night;
And in the wood, a league without the town,
Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
To do observance to a morn of May,
There will I stay for thee.

Her. My good Lysander!
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow;
By his best arrow with the golden head;
By the simplicity of Venus' doves;
By that which knitteth souls, and prospers loves;
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,
When the false Trojan under sail was seen;
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke;—
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

Lys. Keep promise, love: Look, here comes Helena.

Enter HELENA.

Her. God speed fair Helena! Whither away?

Hel. Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.
Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!
Your eyes are lode-stars;[9] and your tongue's sweet air
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
Sickness is catching; O, were favour[1] so!
Your's would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.

[9] Pole-stars. [1] Countenance.

Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
The rest I'll give to be to you translated.
O, teach me how you look; and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

Her. I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

Hel. O, that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

Her. I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

Hel. O, that my prayers could such affection move!

Her. The more I hate, the more he follows me.

Hel. The more I love, the more he hateth me.

Her. His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

Hel. None, but your beauty; 'Would that fault were mine!

Her. Take comfort; he no more shall see my face;
Lysander and myself will fly this place.—
Before the time I did Lysander see,
Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me:
O then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turn'd a heaven unto hell!

Lys. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:
To-morrow-night when Phœbe doth behold
Her silver visage in the wat'ry glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,
(A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,)
Through Athens' gates have we devis'd to steal.

Her. And in the wood, where often you and I
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet:
There my Lysander and myself shall meet:
And thence, from Athens, turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and stranger companies.

Farewell, sweet playfellow; pray thou for us,
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight
From lovers' food, till morrow deep midnight.
[*Exit* HERM.

Lys. I will, my Hermia.—Helena, adieu:
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you! [*Exit* LYS.

Hel. How happy some, o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know.
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities.
Things base and vile, holding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity.
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;
And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind:
Nor hath love's mind of any judgement taste;
Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste:
And therefore is love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguil'd:
As waggish boys in game[2] themselves forswear,
So the boy love is perjur'd every where:
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,[3]
He hail'd down oaths, that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolv'd, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:
Then to the wood will he, to-morrow night,
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expence:

[2] Sport. [3] Eyes.

But herein mean I to enrich my pain.
To have his sight thither, and back again. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The same. A Room in a Cottage.

Enter SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, QUINCE, *and* STARVELING.

Quin. Is all our company here?

Bot. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.

Quin. Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the duke and duchess, on his wedding-day at night.

Bot. First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on; then read the names of the actors; and so grow to a point.

Quin. Marry, our play is—The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.

Bot. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry.—Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll: Masters, spread yourselves.

Quin. Answer, as I call you.—Nick Bottom, the weaver.

Bot. Ready: Name what part I am for, and proceed.

Quin. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

Bot. What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

Quin. A lover, that kills himself most gallantly for love.

Bot. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: If I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest:—Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

"The raging rocks,
"With shivering shocks,
"Shall break the locks
"Of prison-gates:
"And Phibbus' car
"Shall shine from far,
"And make and mar
"The foolish fates."

This was lofty!—Now name the rest of the players.—This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

Quin. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

Flu. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You must take Thisby on you.

Flu. What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

Quin. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

Flu. Nay, faith, let me not play a woman; I have a beard coming.

Quin. That's all one; you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

Bot. An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too: I'll speak in a monstrous little voice;—*Thisne, Thisne,—Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear; thy Thisby dear! and lady dear!*

Quin. No, no; you must play Pyramus, and, Flute, you Thisby.

Bot. Well, proceed.

Quin. Robin Starveling, the tailor.

Star. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother.—Tom Snout, the tinker.

Snout. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You, Pyramus's father; myself, Thisby's father;—Snug, the joiner, you, the lion's part:—and, I hope, here is a play fitted.

Snug. Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

Quin. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

Bot. Let me play the lion too: I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I will make the duke say, *Let him roar again, Let him roar again.*

Quin. An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek: and that were enough to hang us all.

All. That would hang us every mother's son.

Bot. I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us: but I will aggravate my voice so, that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you an[4] 'twere any nightingale.

Quin. You can play no part but Pyramus: for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man, as one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely,

[4] As if.

gentleman-like man; therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

Bot. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in?

Quin. Why, what you will.

Bot. I will discharge it in either your straw-coloured beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain-beard, or your French-crown-colour beard, your perfect yellow.

Quin. Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and then you will play bare-faced.—But, masters, here are your parts: and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moon-light; there will we rehearse: for if we meet in the city, we shall be dog'd with company, and our devices known. In the mean time I will draw a bill of properties,[5] such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.

Bot. We will meet; and there we may rehearse more obscenely, and courageously. Take pains; be perfect; adieu.

Quin. At the duke's oak we meet.

Bot. Enough; Hold, or cut bow-strings.[6]

[*Exeunt.*

[5] Articles required in performing a play.

[6] At all events.

ACT II.

SCENE I. A Wood near Athens.

Enter a Fairy *at one door, and* PUCK *at another.*

Puck. How now, spirit! whither wander you?
Fai. Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough briar,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander every where,
Swifter than the moones sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs[7] upon the green:
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours:
I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob[8] of spirits, I'll be gone;
Our queen and all her elves come here anon.
Puck. The king doth keep his revels here to-night;
Take heed, the queen come not within his sight.
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she, as her attendant, hath
A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king;
She never had so sweet a changeling:
And jealous Oberon would have the child
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild:

[7] Circles. [8] A term of contempt.

But she, perforce, withholds the loved boy,
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy:
And now they never meet in grove, or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled star-light sheen,[9]
But they do square;[1] that all their elves, for fear,
Creep into acorn cups, and hide them there.

Fai. Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite,
Call'd Robin Good-fellow: are you not he,
That fright the maidens of the villagery;
Skim milk; and sometimes labour in the quern,[7]
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;
And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;[2]
Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
You do their work, and they shall have good luck:
Are not you he?

Puck. Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab;[3]
And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
And on her wither'd dew-lap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,

[9] Shining. [1] Quarrel. [7] Mill. [2] Yeast.
[3] Wild apple.

And *tailor* cries, and falls into a cough;
And then the whole quire hold their hips, and loffe;
And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.—
But room, Faery, here comes Oberon.

Fai. And here my mistress:—'Would that he were gone!

SCENE II.

Enter OBERON, *at one door, with his train, and* TITANIA, *at another, with hers.*

Obe. Ill met by moon-light, proud Titania.

Tita. What, jealous Oberon? Fairy, skip hence;
I have forsworn his bed and company.

Obe. Tarry, rash wanton; Am not I thy lord?

Tita. Then I must be thy lady: But I know
When thou hast stol'n away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steep of India?
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress, and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded; and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

Obe. How canst thou thus, for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?
And make him with fair Æglé break his faith,

With Ariadne, and Antiopa?

Tita. These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,
Or on the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land,
Have every pelting[4] river made so proud,
That they have overborne their continents:[5]
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat; and the green corn
Hath rotted, ere his youth attain'd a beard:
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
And crows are fatted with the murrain flock;
The nine men's morris[6] is fill'd up with mud;
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,
For lack of tread, are undistinguishable:
The human mortals want their winter here;
No night is now with hymn or carol blest:—
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatick diseases do abound:
And thorough this distemperature, we see
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;
And on old Hyems' chin, and icy crown,

[4] Petty. [5] Banks which contain them.
[6] A game played by boys.

An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set: The spring, the summer,
The childing[7] autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries; and the 'mazed world,
By their increase,[8] now knows not which is which:
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissention;
We are their parents and original.

Obe. Do you amend it then; it lies in you:
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman.[9]

Tita. Set your heart at rest,
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a vot'ress of my order:
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side;
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking the embarked traders on the flood;
When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive,
And grow big-bellied, with the wanton wind:
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait,
(Following her womb, then rich with my young 'squire,)
Would imitate; and sail upon the land,
To fetch me trifles, and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandize.
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And, for her sake, I do rear up her boy:
And, for her sake, I will not part with him.

[7] Autumn producing flowers unseasonably.
[8] Produce. [9] Page.

Obe. How long within this wood intend you stay?

Tita. Perchance, till after Theseus' wedding-day.
If you will patiently dance in our round,
And see our moon-light revels, go with us;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

Obe. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

Tita. Not for thy kingdom.—Fairies, away:
We shall chide down-right, if I longer stay.
[*Exeunt* TITANIA, *and her train.*

Obe. Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove,
Till I torment thee for this injury.—
My gentle Puck, come hither: Thou remember'st
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back,
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song;
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's musick.

Puck. I remember.

Obe. That very time I saw, (but thou could'st not,)
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal, throned by the west;
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moo;
And the imperial vot'ress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.[1]
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:

[1] Exempt from love.

It fell upon a little western flower,—
Before, milk-white; now purple with love's wound,—
And maidens call it, love-in-idleness.
Fetch me that flower; the herb I show'd thee once:
The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid,
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb: and be thou here again,
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

Puck. I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes. [*Exit* Puck.

Obe. Having once this juice,
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:
The next thing then she waking looks upon,
(Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,)
She shall pursue it with the soul of love.
And ere I take this charm off from her sight,
(As I can take it, with another herb,)
I'll make her render up her page to me.
But who comes here? I am invisible;
And I will over-hear their conference.

Enter DEMETRIUS, HELENA *following him.*

Dem. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander, and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me, they were stol'n into this wood,
And here am I, and wood[a] within this wood,
Because I cannot meet with Hermia.

[a] Mad, raving.

Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.
Hel. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart
Is true as steel: Leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.
Dem. Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair?
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you—I do not, nor I cannot love you?
Hel. And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love,
(And yet a place of high respect with me,)
Than to be used as you use your dog?
Dem. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick, when I do look on thee.
Hel. And I am sick, when I look not on you.
Dem. You do impeach[8] your modesty too much,
To leave the city, and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not;
To trust the opportunity of night,
And the ill counsel of a desert place,
With the rich worth of your virginity.
Hel. Your virtue is my privilege for that.
It is not night, when I do see your face,
Therefore I think I am not in the night:
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company;
For you, in my respect, are all the world:

[8] Bring in question.

Then how can it be said, I am alone,
When all the world is here to look on me?

Dem. I'll run from thee, and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will, the story shall be chang'd;
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tiger: Bootless speed!
When cowardice pursues, and valour flies.

Dem. I will not stay thy questions; let me go:
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

Hel. Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fye, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.
I'll follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon[4] the hand I love so well.

[*Exeunt* DEM. *and* HEL.

Obe. Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave this grove,
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love.—

Re-enter PUCK.

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck. Ay, there it is.

Obe. I pray thee, give it me.
I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where ox-lips[5] and the nodding violet grows;

[4] By. [5] The greater cowslip.

Quite over-canopied with lush[6] woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania, some time of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes;
But do it, when the next thing he espies
May be the lady: Thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care; that he may prove
More fond on her, than she upon her love:
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

Puck. Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Another part of the Wood.

Enter TITANIA, *with her train.*

Tita. Come, now a roundel,[7] and a fairy song;
Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;
Some, to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds;
Some, war with rear-mice[8] for their leathern wings,
To make my small elves coats; and some, keep back
The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots, and wonders

[6] Vigorous. [7] A kind of dance. [8] Bats.

At our quaint spirits :[9] Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices, and let me rest.

SONG.

1 Fai. *You spotted snakes, with double tongue,*
Thorny hedge-hogs, be not seen;
Newts,[1] *and blind-worms,*[2] *do no wrong;*
Come not near our fairy queen:

CHORUS. *Philomel, with melody,*
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby:
Never harm, nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.

II.

2 Fai. *Weaving spiders, come not here;*
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners hence:
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm, nor snail, do no offence.

CHORUS. *Philomel, with melody, &c.*

1 *Fai.* Hence, away; now all is well:
One, aloof, stand sentinel.
[*Exeunt* Fairies. TITANIA *sleeps.*

Enter OBERON.

Obe. What thou seest, when thou dost wake,
[*Squeezes the flower on* TITANIA'S *eye-lids.*
Do it for thy true love take;
Love, and languish for his sake:

[9] Sports. [1] Efts. [2] Slow-worms.

Be it ounce,[3] or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar with bristled hair,
In thy eye that shall appear
When thou wak'st, it is thy dear;
Wake, when some vile thing is near. } *Exit.*

Enter LYSANDER *and* HERMIA.

Lys. Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way;
We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Her. Be it so, Lysander: find you out a bed,
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

Lys. One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.

Her. Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear,
Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

Lys. O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence;
Love takes the meaning, in love's conference.
I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit;
So that but one heart we can make of it:
Two bosoms interchained with an oath;
So then, two bosoms, and a single troth.
Then, by your side no bed-room me deny;
For, lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

Her. Lysander riddles very prettily:—
Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,
If Hermia meant to say, Lysander lied.
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy
Lie further off; in human modesty

[3] The small tiger.

Such separation, as, may well be said,
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid:
So far be distant; and good night, sweet friend:
Thy love ne'er alter, till thy sweet life end!

Lys. Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;
And then end life, when I end loyalty!
Here is my bed: Sleep give thee all his rest!

Her. With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd! [*They sleep.*

Enter PUCK.

Puck. Through the forest have I gone,
But Athenian found I none,
On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love.
Night and silence! who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear:
This is he, my master said,
Despised the Athenian maid;
And here the maiden, sleeping sound,
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul! she durst not lie
Near this lack-love, kill-courtesy.
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe:[4]
When thou wak'st, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eye-lid.
So awake, when I am gone;
For I must now to Oberon. [*Exit.*

[4] Possess.

Enter DEMETRIUS *and* HELENA, *running.*

Hel. Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

Dem I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.

Hel. O, wilt thou darkling[5] leave me? do not so.

Dem. Stay, on thy peril; I alone will go.

[*Exit* DEMETRIUS.

Hel. O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;
For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:
If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.
No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;
For beasts that meet me, run away for fear:
Therefore, no marvel, though Demetrius
Do, as a monster, fly my presence thus.
What wicked and dissembling glass of mine
Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne?—
But who is here?—Lysander! on the ground!
Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound:—
Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

Lys. And run through fire I will, for thy sweet sake. [*Waking.*

Transparent Helena! Nature here shows art,
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name, to perish on my sword!

Hel. Do not say so, Lysander; say not so:
What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what though?

[5] In the dark.

Yet Hermia still loves you: then be content.

Lys. Content with Hermia? No: I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
Not Hermia, but Helena I love:
Who will not change a raven for a dove?
The will of man is by his reason sway'd;
And reason says you are the worthier maid.
Things growing are not ripe until their season:
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason;
And touching now the point of human skill,
Reason becomes the marshal to my will,
And leads me to your eyes; where I o'erlook
Love's stories written in love's richest book.

Hel. Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When, at your hands, did I deserve this scorn?
Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,
That I did never, no, nor never can,
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,
In such disdainful manner me to woo.
But fare you well: perforce I must confess,
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.
O, that a lady, of one man refus'd,
Should, of another, therefore be abus'd! [*Exit.*

Lys. She sees not Hermia:—Hermia, sleep thou there;
And never may'st thou come Lysander near!
For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings;
Or, as the heresies, that men do leave,
Are hated most of those they did deceive;

So thou, my surfeit, and my heresy,
Of all be hated; but the most of me!
And all my powers, address your love and might,
To honour Helen, and to be her knight! [*Exit.*

Her. [*starting.*] Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy best,
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
Ah me, for pity!—what a dream was here?
Lysander, look, how I do quake with fear:
Methought a serpent eat my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey:—
Lysander! what, remov'd? Lysander! lord!
What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?
Alack, where are you? speak, an if you hear;
Speak, of all loves;[6] I swoon almost with fear.
No?—then I well perceive you are not nigh:
Either death, or you, I'll find immediately. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. The same. The Queen of Fairies lying asleep.

Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, *and* STARVELING.

Bot. Are we all met?

Quin. Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal: This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn brake our tyring-house; and we will do it in action, as we will do it before the duke.

Bot. Peter Quince,—

[6] By all that is dear.

Quin. What say'st thou, bully Bottom?

Bot. There are things in this comedy of *Pyramus and Thisby*, that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?

Snout. By'rlakin,[7] a parlous[8] fear.

Star. I believe, we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

Bot. Not a whit; I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue: and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords; and that Pyramus is not killed indeed: and, for the more better assurance, tell them, that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: This will put them out of fear.

Quin. Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.—

Bot. No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

Star. I fear it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in, God shield us! a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful[9] wild-fowl than your lion, living; and we ought to look to it.

Snout. Therefore, another prologue must tell, he is not a lion.

Bot. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he

[7] By our ladykin. [8] Dangerous.
[9] Terrible.

himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect,—Ladies, or fair ladies, I would wish you, or, I would request you, or, I would entreat you, not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: No, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are:—and there, indeed, let him name his name; and tell them plainly, he is Snug the joiner.

Quin. Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things; that is, to bring the moon-light into a chamber: for you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moon-light.

Snug. Doth the moon shine, that night we play our play?

Bot. A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanack; find out moon-shine, find out moon-shine.

Quin. Yes, it doth shine that night.

Bot. Why, then you may leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open; and the moon may shine in at the casement.

Quin. Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say, he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moon-shine. Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby, says the story, did talk through the chinks of a wall.

Snug. You never can bring in a wall.—What say you, Bottom?

Bot. Some man or other must present wall: and let him have some plaster, or some lome, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; or let him

hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake[1] and so every one according to his cue.

Enter PUCK *behind.*

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?
What, a play toward? I'll be an auditor;
An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

Quin. Speak, Pyramus:—Thisby, stand forth.

Pyr. *Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,—*

Quin. Odours, odours.

Pyr. —— *odours savours sweet:*
So doth thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear.—
But, hark, a voice! stay thou but here a while,
And by and by I will to thee appear. [*Exit.*

Puck. A stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here! [*Aside.—Exit.*

This. Must I speak now?

Quin. Ay, marry, must you: for you must understand, he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

This. *Most radiant Pyramus, most lilly-white of hue,*
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,
Most brisky juvenal,[2] *and eke most lovely Jew,*
As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

[1] Thicket. [2] Young man.

Quin. Ninus' tomb, man: Why you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your part at once, cues[3] and all.—Pyramus enter; your cue is past; it is, *never tire.*

Re-enter PUCK, *and* BOTTOM *with an ass's head.*

This. O,—*As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire.*

Pyr. *If I were fair, Thisby, I were only thine:—*

Quin. O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted. Pray, masters! fly, masters! help!

[*Exeunt* Clowns.

Puck. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier;
Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire;
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn.

[*Exit.*

Bot. Why do they run away? this is a knavery of them, to make me afeard.[4]

Re-enter SNOUT.

Snout. O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee?

Bot. What do you see? you see an ass's head of your own; Do you?

[3] The last words of the preceding speech, which serve as a hint to him who is to speak next.

[4] Afraid.

Re-enter QUINCE.

Quin. Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art translated. [*Exit.*

Bot. I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid. [*Sings.*

The ousel-cock, so black of hue,
With orange-tawney bill,
The throstle with his note so true,
The wren with little quill;

Tita. What angel wakes me from my flowery bed? [*Waking.*

Bot. *The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,*
The plain-song cuckoo[5] *gray,*
Whose note full many a man doth mark,
And dares not answer, nay;—

for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird? who would give a bird the lie, though he cry, *cuckoo*, never so?

Tita. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note,
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

Bot. Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that: And yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days:

[5] The Cuckoo with his uniform note.

The more the pity, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek[6] upon occasion.

Tita. Thou are as wise as thou art beautiful.

Bot. Not so, neither: but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

Tita. Out of this wood do not desire to go;
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit, of no common rate;
The summer still doth tend upon my state,
And I do love thee: therefore, go with me;
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee;
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep:
And sing, while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep:
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.—
Peas-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustard-seed!

Enter four Fairies.

1 *Fai.* Ready.
2 *Fai.* And I.
3 *Fai.* And I.
4 *Fai.* Where shall we go?

Tita. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,[7]
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey bags steal from the humble-bees,
And, for night tapers, crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,

[6] Joke. [7] Gooseberries.

To have my love to bed, and to arise;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moon-beams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

1 *Fai.* Hail, mortal!

2 *Fai.* Hail!

3 *Fai.* Hail!

4 *Fai.* Hail!

Bot. I cry your worships mercy, heartily.—I beseech, your worship's name.

Cob. Cobweb.

Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good master Cobweb: If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you.—Your name, honest gentleman?

Peas. Peas-blossom.

Bot. I pray you, commend me to mistress Squash, your mother, and to master Peascod, your father. Good master Peas-blossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too.—Your name, I beseech you, sir?

Mus. Mustard-seed.

Bot. Good master Mustard-seed, I know your patience well: that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your house: I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you more acquaintance, good master Mustard-seed.

Tita. Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.
The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye;
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.
Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Another part of the Wood.

Enter OBERON.

Obe. I wonder, if Titania be awak'd;
Then, what it was that next came in her eye,
Which she must dote on in extremity.

Enter PUCK.

Here comes my messenger.—How now, mad spirit?
What night-rule[8] now about this haunted grove?

Puck. My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches,[9] rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play,
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,[1]
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake:
When I did him at this advantage take,
An ass's nowl[2] I fixed on his head;
Anon, his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimick[3] comes: When they him spy,
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report

[8] Revelry. [9] Simple fellows.
[1] Stupid company. [2] Head. [3] Actor.

Sever themselves, and madly sweep the sky;
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly:
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls;
He murder cries, and help from Athens calls.
Their sense, thus weak, lost with their fears, thus strong,
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong:
For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch;
Some, sleeves; some, hats: from yielders all things catch.
I led them on in this distracted fear,
And left sweet Pyramus translated there:
When in that moment (so it came to pass,)
Titania wak'd, and straightway lov'd an ass.

Obe. This falls out better than I could devise.
But hast thou yet latch'd[4] the Athenian's eyes
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

Puck. I took him sleeping,—that is finish'd too,—
And the Athenian woman by his side?
That, when he wak'd, of force she must be ey'd.

Enter DEMETRIUS *and* HERMIA.

Obe. Stand close; this is the same Athenian.

Puck. This is the woman, but not this the man.

Dem. O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

Her. Now I but chide, but I should use thee worse;
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.

[4] Infected.

If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,
And kill me too.
The sun was not so true unto the day,
As he to me: Would he have stol'n away
From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon,
This whole earth may be bor'd; and that the moon
May through the center creep, and so displease
Her brother's noon-tide with the Antipodes.
It cannot be, but thou hast murder'd him;
So should a murderer look; so dead, so grim.

Dem. So should the murder'd look; and so should I,
Pierc'd through the heart with your stern cruelty:
Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear,
As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

Her. What's this to my Lysander? where is he?
Ah, good Demetrius, will thou give him me?

Dem. I had rather give his carcase to my hounds.

Her. Out, dog! out, cur! thou driv'st me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him then?
Henceforth be never number'd among men!
O! once tell true, tell true, even for my sake;
Durst thou have look'd upon him, being awake,
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch![5]
Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?
An adder did it; for with doubler tongue
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

Dem. You spend your passion on a mispris'd[6] mood:
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood;

[5] Exploit. [6] Mistaken.

Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

Her. I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

Dem. And if I could, what should I get therefore?

Her. A privilege, never to see me more.—
And from thy hated presence part I so:
See me no more, whether he be dead or no. [*Exit.*

Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vein:
Here, therefore, for a while I will remain.
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow
For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe;
Which now, in some slight measure it will pay,
If for his tender here I make some stay. [*Lies down.*

Obe. What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite,
And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight:
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue
Some true-love turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.

Puck. Then fate o'er-rules; that, one man holding troth,
A million fail, confounding oath on oath.

Obe. About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And Helena of Athens look thou find:
All fancy-sick[7] she is, and pale of cheer[8]
With sighs of love, that cost the fresh blood dear:
By some illusion see thou bring her here;
I'll charm his eyes, against she do appear.

Puck. I go, I go; look, how I go;
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow. [*Exit.*

Obe. Flower of this purple die,
Hit with Cupid's archery,
Sink in apple of his eye!
When his love he doth espy,

[7] Love-sick. [8] Countenance.

Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.—
When thou wak'st, if she be by,
Beg of her for remedy.

Re-enter PUCK.

Puck. Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand;
And the youth, mistook by me,
Pleading for a lover's fee;
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!
Obe. Stand aside: the noise they make,
Will cause Demetrius to awake.
Puck. Then will two at once, woo one;
That must needs be sport alone;
And those things do best please me,
That befal preposterously.

Enter LYSANDER *and* HELENA.

Lys. Why should you think, that I should woo in scorn?
Scorn and derision never come in tears:
Look, when I vow, I weep; and vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.
How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
Bearing the badge of faith, to prove them true?
Hel. You do advance your cunning more and more.
When truth kills truth, O devilish holy fray!
These vows are Hermia's; Will you give her o'er?
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh:

Your vows, to her and me, put in two scales,
Will even weigh; and both as light as tales.
Lys. I had no judgment, when to her I swore.
Hel. Nor none, in my mind, now you give her o'er.
Lys. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.
Dem. [*awaking.*] O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow
That pure congealed white, high Taurus' snow,
Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow,
When thou hold'st up thy hand: O let me kiss
This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!
Hel. O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me, for your merriment.
If you were civil, and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.
Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
But you must join, in souls,[9] to mock me too?
If you were men, as men you are in show,
You would not use a gentle lady so;
To vow, and swear and superpraise my parts,
When, I am sure, you hate me with your hearts
You both are rivals, and love Hermia;
And now both rivals, to mock Helena:
A trim exploit, a manly enterprize,
To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes,
With your derision! none, of noble sort,[1]
Would so offend a virgin; and extort
A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

[9] Heartily. [1] Degree.

Lys. You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;
For you love Hermia; this, you know, I know:
And here, with all good will, with all my heart,
In Hermia's love I yield you up my part;
And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
Whom I do love, and will do to my death.

Hel. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

Dem. Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none:
If e'er I lov'd her, all that love is gone.
My heart with her but, as guest-wise, sojourn'd;
And now to Helen is it home return'd,
There to remain.

Lys. Helen, it is not so.

Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Lest, to thy peril, thou aby it dear.[2]—
Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

Enter HERMIA.

Her. Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,
It pays the hearing double recompense:—
Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

Lys. Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?

Her. What love could press Lysander from my side?

Lys. Lysander's love, that would not let him bide,

[2] Pay dearly for it.

Fair Helena; who more engilds the night
Than all yon fiery oes[3] and eyes of light.
Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,
The hate I bare thee made me leave thee so?
Her. You speak not as you think; it cannot be.
Hel. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd, all three,
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspir'd, have you with these contriv'd
To bait me with this foul derison?
Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us,—O, and is all forgot?
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?
We, Hermia, like two artificial[4] gods,
Have with our neelds[5] created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted;
But yet a union in partition,
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem:
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?

[3] Circles. [4] Ingenious. [5] Needles.

It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it;
Though I alone do feel the injury.

Her. I am amazed at your passionate words:
I scorn you not; it seems that you scorn me.

Hel. Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
To follow me, and praise my eyes and face?
And made your other love, Demetrius,
(Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,)
To call me goddess, nymph, divine, and rare,
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this
To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,
And tender me, forsooth, affection;
But by your setting on, by your consent?
What though I be not so in grace as you,
So hung upon with love, so fortunate;
But miserable most, to love unlov'd?
This you should pity, rather than despise.

Her. I understand not what you mean by this.

Hel. Ay, do, persévere, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mows[6] upon me when I turn my back;
Wink at each other; hold the sweet jest up:
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But, fare ye well: 'tis partly mine own fault;
Which death, or absence, soon shall remedy.

Lys. Stay, gentle Helena; hear my excuse;
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

Hel. O excellent!

[6] Wry faces.

Her. Sweet, do not scorn her so.
Dem. If she cannot entreat, I can compel.
Lys. Thou canst compel no more than she entreat;
Thy threats have no more strength, than her weak prayers.—
Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do;
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,
To prove him false, that says I love thee not.
Dem. I say, I love thee more than he can do.
Lys. If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.
Dem. Quick, come,—
Her. Lysander, whereto tends all this?
Lys. Away, you Ethiop!
Dem. No, no, sir:—he will
Seem to break loose; take on, as you would follow;
But yet come not: You are a tame man, go?
Lys. Hang off, thou cat, thou burr: vile thing let loose;
Or I will shake thee from me, like a serpent.
Her. Why are you grown so rude? what change is this,
Sweet love?
Lys. Thy love? out, tawny Tartar, out!
Out, loathed medicine! hated potion, hence!
Her. Do you not jest?
Hel. Yes, 'sooth; and so do you.
Lys. Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.
Dem. I would, I had your bond; for, I perceive,
A weak bond holds you; I'll not trust your word.
Lys. What should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

Her. What, can you do me greater harm, than hate?
Hate me! wherefore? O me! what news, my love?
Am not I Hermia? Are not you Lysander?
I am as fair now, as I was erewhile.
Since night, you lov'd me; yet, since night you left me:
Why, then you left me,—O, the gods forbid!—
In earnest, shall I say?

Lys. Ay, by my life;
And never did desire to see thee more.
Therefore, be out of hope, of question, doubt,
Be certain, nothing truer; 'tis no jest,
That I do hate thee, and love Helena.

Her. O me! you juggler! you canker-blossom![7]
You thief of love! what, have you come by night,
And stol'n my love's heart from him?

Hel. Fine, i'faith!
Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie? you counterfeit, you puppet you!

Her. Puppet! why so? Ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures, she hath urg'd her height;
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.—
And are you grown so high in his esteem,
Because I am so dwarfish, and so low?
How low am I, thou painted maypole? speak;

[7] A worm that preys on buds of flowers.

How low am I? I am not yet so low,
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

Hel. I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me: I was never curst;[8]
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;
I am a right maid for my cowardice;
Let her not strike me: You, perhaps, may think,
Because she's something lower than myself,
That I can match her.

Her. Lower! hark, again.

Hel. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.
I evermore did love you, Hermia,
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd you;
Save, that, in love unto Demetrius,
I told him of your stealth unto this wood:
He follow'd you; for love, I follow'd him.
But he hath chid me hence; and threaten'd me
To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too:
And now, so you will let me quiet go,
To Athens will I bear my folly back,
And follow you no further: Let me go:
You see how simple and how fond[9] I am.

Her. Why, get you gone: Who is't that hinders you?

Hel. A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

Her. What, with Lysander?

Hel. With Demetrius.

Lys. Be not afraid: she shall not harm thee, Helena.

Dem. No, sir; she shall not, though you take her part.

[8] Shrewish or mischievous. [9] Foolish.

Hel. O, when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd:
She was a vixen, when she went to school;
And, though she be but little, she is fierce.
Her. Little again? nothing but low and little?—
Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?
Let me come to her.
Lys. Get you gone, you dwarf;
You minimus, of hind'ring knot grass[1] made;
You bead, you acorn.
Dem. You are to too officious,
In her behalf that scorns your services.
Let her alone; speak not of Helena;
Take not her part: for if thou dost intend[2]
Never so little show of love to her,
Thou shalt aby it.
Lys. Now she holds me not;
Now follow, if thou dar'st, to try whose right,
Or thine or mine, is most in Helena.
Dem. Follow? nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jole. [*Exeunt* LYS. *and* DEM.
Her. You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you:
Nay, go not back.
Hel. I will not trust you, I;
Nor longer stay in your curst company.
Your hands, than mine, are quicker for a fray;
My legs are longer though, to run away. [*Exit.*
Her. I am amaz'd, and know not what to say.
[*Exit, pursuing* HELENA.
Obe. This is thy negligence: still thou mistak'st,
Or else commit'st thy knaveries wilfully.
Puck. Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.

[1] Anciently knot-grass was believed to prevent the growth of children. [2] Pretend.

Did not you tell me, I should know the man
By the Athenian garments he had on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprize,
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes:
And so far am I glad it so did sort,[3]
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

Obe. Thou seest, these lovers seek a place to fight:
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
The starry welkin cover thou anon
With drooping fog, as black as Acheron;
And lead these testy rivals so astray,
As one come not within another's way.
Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue,
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong;
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius;
And from each other look thou lead them thus,
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye;
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,[4]
To take from thence all error, with his might,
And make his eye-balls roll with wonted sight.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream, and fruitless vision;
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,[5]
With league, whose date till death shall never end.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen, and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

[3] Happen. [4] Medicinal efficacy. [5] Go.

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste;
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger;
At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to church-yards: damned spirits all,
That in cross-ways and floods have burial,
Already to their wormy beds are gone;
For fear lest day should look their shames upon,
They wilfully themselves exile from light,
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

Obe. But we are spirits of another sort:
I with the Morning's Love[6] have oft made sport;
And, like a forester, the groves may tread,
Even till the eastern gate, all fiery red,
Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.
But, notwithstanding, haste; make no delay:
We may effect this business yet ere day.

[*Exit* OBERON.

Puck. Up and down, up and down;
I will lead them up and down:
I am fear'd in field and town;
Goblin, lead them up and down.
Here comes one.

Enter LYSANDER.

Lys. Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

Puck. Here villain; drawn and ready. Where art thou?

[6] Cephalus, the paramour of Aurora.

Lys. I will be with thee straight.
Puck. Follow me then
To plainer ground. [*Exit* LYS. *as following the voice.*

Enter DEMETRIUS.

Dem. Lysander! speak again.
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speak. In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?
Puck. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,
And wilt not come? Come, recreant; come, thou child;
I'll whip thee with a rod: He is defil'd,
That draws a sword on thee.
Dem. Yea; art thou there?
Puck. Follow my voice; we'll try no manhood here. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter LYSANDER.

Lys. He goes before me, and still dares me on;
When I come where he calls, then he is gone.
The villain is much lighter heel'd than I:
I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly;
That fallen am I in dark uneven way,
And here will rest me. Come, thou gentle day!
[*Lies down.*
For if but once thou show me thy gray light,
I'll find Demetrius, and revenge this spite. [*Sleeps.*

Re-enter PUCK *and* DEMETRIUS.

Puck. Ho, ho! ho, ho! Coward, why com'st thou
not?

Dem. Abide me, if thou dar'st; for well I wot,
Thou runn'st before me, shifting every place;
And dar'st not stand, nor look me in the face.
Where art thou?

Puck. Come hither; I am here.

Dem. Nay, then thou mock'st me. Thou shalt
buy this dear,
If ever I thy face by day-light see:
Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me
To measure out my length on this cold bed.—
By day's approach look to be visited.

[*Lies down and sleeps.*

Enter HELENA.

Hel. O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Abate thy hours: shine, comforts, from the east;
That I may back to Athens, by day-light,
From these that my poor company detest:—
And, sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye,
Steal me awhile from mine own company. [*Sleeps.*

Puck. Yet but three? Come one more,
Two of both kinds makes up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad:—
Cupid is a knavish lad,
Thus to make poor females mad.

Enter HERMIA.

Her. Never so weary, never so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers;
I can no further crawl, no further go;
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.
Here will I rest me, till the break of day.
Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray!
[*Lies down.*

Puck. On the ground
Sleep sound:
I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.
[*Squeezing the juice on* LYSANDER'S *eye.*
When thou wak'st,
Thou tak'st
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye:
And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown:
Jack shall have Jill;
Nought shall go ill;
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.
[*Exit* PUCK.—DEM. HEL. *&c. sleep.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. The same.

Enter TITANIA *and* BOTTOM, Fairies *attending*; OBERON *behind unseen.*

Tita. Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,[7]
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

Bot. Where's Peas-blossom?

Peas. Ready.

Bot. Scratch my head, Peas-blossom.—Where's monsieur Cobweb?

Cob. Ready.

Bot. Monsieur Cobweb; good monsieur, get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur; and, good monsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loath to have you overflown with a honey-bag, signior.—Where's monsieur Mustard-seed?

Must. Ready.

Bot. Give me your neif,[8] monsieur Mustard-seed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good monsieur.

Must. What's your will?

Bot. Nothing, good monsieur, but to help cavalero Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's, monsieur; for, methinks, I am marvellous hairy about the face:

[7] Stroke. [8] Fist.

and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

Tita. What, wilt thou hear some musick, my sweet love?

Bot. I have a reasonable good ear in musick: let us have the tongs and the bones.

Tita. Or, say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat.

Bot. Truly, a peck of provender; I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks, I have a great desire to a bottle of hay: good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

Tita. I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee new nuts.

Bot. I had rather have a handful, or two, of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me; I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

Tita. Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.
Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away.
So doth the woodbine, the sweet honeysuckle,
Gently entwist,—the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.
O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee!

[*They sleep.*

OBERON *advances.* *Enter* PUCK.

Obe. Welcome, good Robin. See'st thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity.
For meeting her of late, behind the wood,
Seeking sweet savours for this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her, and fall out with her:
For she his hairy temples then had rounded

With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;
And that same dew, which sometime on the buds
Was wont to swell, like round and orient pearls,
Stood now within the pretty flourets' eyes,
Like tears, that did their own disgrace bewail.
When I had, at my pleasure, taunted her,
And she, in mild terms, begg'd my patience,
I then did ask of her her changeling child;
Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent
To bear him to my bower in fairy land.
And now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes.
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp
From off the head of this Athenian swain;
That he awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again repair;
And think no more of this night's accidents,
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the fairy queen.
Be, as thou wast wont to be;
[Touching her eyes with an herb.
See, as thou wast wont to see:
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower
Hath such force and blessed power.
Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet queen.
Tita. My Oberon! what visions have I seen!
Methought, I was enamour'd of an ass.
Obe. There lies your love.
Tita. How came these things to pass?
O, how mine eyes do loath his visage now!
Obe. Silence, a while.—Robin, take off this head.—
Titania, musick call; and strike more dead

Than common sleep, of all these five the sense.
Tita. Musick, ho! musick; such as charmeth sleep.
Puck. Now, when thou wak'st, with thine own fool's eyes peep.
Obe. Sound, musick. [*Still musick.*] Come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.
Now thou and I are new in amity;
And will, to-morrow midnight, solemnly,
Dance in duke Theseus' house triumphantly,
And bless it to all fair posterity:
There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.
Puck. Fairy king, attend, and mark;
I do hear the morning lark.
Obe. Then, my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after the night's shade:
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wand'ring moon.
Tita. Come, my lord; and in our flight,
Tell me how it came this night,
That I sleeping here was found,
With these mortals, on the ground. [*Exeunt.*

[*Horns sound within.*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS, *and train.*

The. Go, one of you, find out the forester;—
For now our observation is perform'd:
And since we have the vaward[9] of the day,
My love shall hear the musick of my hounds.—
Uncouple in the western valley; go:

9 Forepart.

Despatch, I say, and find the forester.—
We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top,
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

Hip. I was with Hercules, and Cadmus, once,
When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear
With hounds of Sparta: never did I hear
Such gallant chiding;[1] for, besides the groves,
The skies, the fountains, every region near
Seem'd all one mutual cry: I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

The. My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
So flew'd,[2] so sanded; and their heads are hung
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Crook-knee'd, and dew-lap'd like Thessalian bulls;
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,
Each under each. A cry more tuneable
Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly:
Judge, when you hear.—But, soft; what nymphs are these?

Ege. My lord, this is my daughter here asleep:
And this, Lysander; this Demetrius is;
This Helena, old Nedar's Helena:
I wonder of their being here together.

The. No doubt, they rose up early, to observe
The rite of May; and, hearing our intent,
Came here in grace of our solemnity.—
But, speak, Egeus; is not this the day
That Hermia should give answer of her choice?

[1] Sound.

[2] The flews are the large chaps of a hound.

Ege. It is, my lord.

The. Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns.

Horns, and shout within. DEMETRIUS, LYSANDER, HERMIA, *and* HELENA, *wake and start up.*

The. Good-morrow friends. Saint Valentine is past;
Begin these wood-birds but to couple now?

Lys. Pardon, my lord.

[*He and the rest kneel to* THESEUS.

The. I pray you all, stand up.
I know, you are two rival enemies;
How comes this gentle concord in the world,
That hatred is so far from jealousy,
To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity?

Lys. My lord, I shall reply amazedly,
Half 'sleep, half waking: But as yet, I swear,
I cannot truly say how I came here:
But, as I think, (for truly would I speak,—
And now I do bethink me, so it is;)
I came with Hermia hither: our intent
Was, to be gone from Athens, where we might be
Without the peril of the Athenian law.

Ege. Enough, enough, my lord; you have enough:
I beg the law, the law, upon his head.—
They would have stol'n away, they would, Demetrius,
Thereby to have defeated you and me:
You, of your wife; and me, of my consent;
Of my consent that she should be your wife.

Dem. My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
Of this their purpose hither, to this wood;

And I in fury hither follow'd them;
Fair Helena in fancy[3] following me.
But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,
(But by some power it is,) my love to Hermia,
Melted as doth the snow, seems to me now
As the remembrance of an idle gawd,[4]
Which in my childhood I did dote upon:
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
The object, and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia:
But, like in sickness, did I loath this food:
But, as in health, come to my natural taste,
Now do I wish it, love it, long for it,
And will for evermore be true to it.

The. Fair lovers, you are fortunately met:
Of this discourse we more will hear anon.—
Egeus, I will overbear your will;
For in the temple, by and by with us,
These couples shall eternally be knit.
And, for the morning now is something worn,
Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.—
Away, with us, to Athens: Three and three,
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.—
Come, Hippolyta.

[*Exeunt* THE. HIP. EGE. *and train.*

Dem. These things seem small, and undistinguishable,
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

Her. Methinks, I see these things with parted eye,
When every thing seems double.

[3] Love. [4] Toy.

Hel. So methinks:
And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,
Mine own, and not mine own.

Dem. It seems to me,
That yet we sleep, we dream.—Do not you think,
The duke was here, and bid us follow him?

Her. Yea; and my father.

Hel. And Hippolyta.

Lys. And he did bid us follow to the temple.

Dem. Why then, we are awake: let's follow him;
And, by the way, let us recount our dreams.

[*Exeunt.*

As they go out, BOTTOM *awakes.*

Bot. When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer:—my next is, *Most fair Pyramus.*—Hey, ho!—Peter Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender! Snout, the tinker! Starveling! God's my life! stolen hence, and left me asleep! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream,—past the wit of man to say what dream it was: Man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream. Methought I was—there is no man can tell what. Methought I was, and methought I had,—But man is but a patched fool, if he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen; man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the duke: Peradventure,

to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Athens. *A Room in* Quince's *House.*

Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOUT, *and* STARVELING.

Quin. Have you sent to Bottom's house? is he come home yet?

Star. He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt, he is transported.

Flu. If he come not, then the play is marred; It goes not forward, doth it?

Quin. It is not possible: you have not a man in all Athens, able to discharge Pyramus, but he.

Flu. No; he hath simply the best wit of any handycraft man in Athens.

Quin. Yea, and the best person too: and he is a very paramour, for a sweet voice.

Flu. You must say, paragon: a paramour is, God bless us, a thing of nought.

Enter SNUG.

Snug. Masters, the duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married: if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men.

Flu. O sweet bully Bottom! Thus hath he lost sixpence a-day during his life; he could not have 'scaped sixpence a-day: an the duke had not given

him sixpence a-day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hanged; he would have deserved it: sixpence a-day, in Pyramus, or nothing.

Enter BOTTOM.

Bot. Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

Quin. Bottom!—O most courageous day! O most happy hour!

Bot. Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask me not what; for, if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing, right as it fell out.

Quin. Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

Bot. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you, is, that the duke hath dined: Get your apparel together; good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for, the short and the long is, our play is preferred. In any case, let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him, that plays the lion, pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions, nor garlick, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt, but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words; away; go, away.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. The same. An Apartment in the Palace of Theseus.

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, *Lords, and Attendants.*

Hip. 'Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.

The. More strange than true. I never may believe
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.
Lovers, and madmen, have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatick, the lover, and the poet,
Are of imagination all compact:[5]
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold;
That is, the madman: the lover, all as frantick,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation, and a name.
Such tricks hath strong imagination;
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;

[5] Are made of mere imagination.

Or, in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear?

Hip. But all the story of the night told over,
And all their minds transfigur'd so together,
More witnesseth than fancy's images,
And grows to something of great constancy;[6]
But, howsoever, strange, and admirable.

Enter LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA, *and* HELENA.

The. Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.—
Joy, gentle friends! joy, and fresh days of love,
Accompany your hearts!

Lys. More than to us
Wait on your royal walks, your board, your bed!

The. Come now; what masks, what dances shall we have,
To wear away this long age of three hours,
Between our after-supper, and bed time?
Where is our usual manager of mirth?
What revels are in hand? Is there no play,
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?
Call Philostrate.

Philost. Here, mighty Theseus.

The. Say, what abridgement[7] have you for this evening?
What mask? what musick? How shall we beguile
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

Philost. There is a brief,[8] how many sports are ripe;
Make choice of which your highness will see first.
[*Giving a paper.*

[6] Stability. [7] Pastime. [8] Short account.

The. *reads.*] *The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung,*
By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.
We'll none of that: that have I told my love,
In glory of my kinsman Hercules.
The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.
That is an old device; and it was play'd
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.
The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceas'd in beggary.
That is some satire, keen, and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.
A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus,
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.
Merry and tragical? Tedious and brief?
That is, hot ice, and wonderous strange snow.
How shall we find the concord of this discord?
Philost. A play there is, my lord, some ten words long;
Which is as brief as I have known a play;
But by ten words, my lord, it is too long;
Which makes it tedious: for in all the play
There is not one word apt, one player fitted.
And tragical, my noble lord, it is;
For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.
Which, when I saw rehears'd, I must confess,
Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears
The passion of loud laughter never shed.
The. What are they, that do play it?
Philost. Hard-handed men, that work in Athens here,

Which never labour'd in their minds till now;
And now have toil'd their unbreath'd[9] memories
With this same play, against your nuptial.

The. And we will hear it.

Philost. No, my noble lord,
It is not for you: I have heard it over,
And it is nothing, nothing in the world;
Unless you can find sport in their intents,
Extremely stretch'd, and conn'd with cruel pain,
To do you service.

The. I will hear that play;
For never any thing can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it.
Go, bring them in;—and take your places, ladies.

[*Exit* PHILOSTRATE.

Hip. I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharg'd,
And duty in his service perishing.

The. Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

Hip. He says, they can do nothing in this kind.

The. The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake:
And what poor duty cannot do,
Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.
Where I have come, great clerks have purposed
To greet me with premeditated welcomes;
Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,
Make periods in the midst of sentences,
Throttle their practis'd accent in their fears,
And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,

[9] Unexercised.

Not paying me a welcome: Trust me, sweet,
Out of this silence, yet, I pick'd a welcome;
And in the modesty of fearful duty
I read as much, as from the rattling tongue
Of sawcy and audacious eloquence.
Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity,
In least, speak most, to my capacity.

Enter PHILOSTRATE.

Philost. So please your grace, the prologue is addrest.[1]

The. Let him approach. [*Flourish of trumpets.*

Enter Prologue.

Prol. *If we offend, it is with our good will.*
That you should think, we come not to offend,
But with good-will. To shew our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then, we come but in despite.
We do not come as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand; and, by their show,
You shall know all, that you are like to know.

The. This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Lys. He hath rid his prologue, like a rough colt, he knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord: It is not enough to speak, but to speak true.

Hip. Indeed he hath played on this prologue, like a child on a recorder;[2] a sound, but not in government.

[1] Ready. [2] A musical instrument.

The. His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

Enter PYRAMUS *and* THISBE, Wall, Moonshine, *and* Lion, *as in dumb show.*

Prol. "Gentles, perchance, you wonder at this show;
"But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
"This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
"This beauteous lady Thisby is, certain.
"This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
"Wall, that vile wall which did these lovers sunder:
"And through wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
"To whisper; at the which let no man wonder.
"This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,
"Presenteth moon-shine: for, if you will know,
"By moon-shine did these lovers think no scorn
"To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.
"This grisly beast, which by name lion hight,[3]
"The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,
"Did scare away, or rather did affright:
"And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall;
"Which lion vile with bloody mouth did stain:
"Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth, and tall,
"And finds his trusty Thisby's mantle slain:
"Whereat with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
"He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;
"And, Thisby tarrying in mulberry shade,
"His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,

[3] Called.

" Let lion, moon-shine, wall, and lovers twain,
" At large discourse, while here they do remain."

[*Exeunt* Prol. THISBE, Lion, *and* Moonshine.

The. I wonder, if the lion be to speak.

Dem. No wonder, my lord: one lion may, when many asses do.

Wall. " In this same interlude, it doth befall,
" That I, one Snout by name, present a wall:
" And such a wall, as I would have you think,
" That had in it a cranny'd hole, or chink,
" Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisby,
" Did whisper often very secretly.
" This loam, this rough-cast, and this stone, doth show
" That I am that same wall; the truth is so:
" And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
" Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper."

The. Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

Dem. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord.

The. Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

Enter PYRAMUS.

Pyr. " O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!
" O night, which ever art, when day is not!
" O night, O night, alack, alack, alack,
" I fear my Thisby's promise is forgot!—
" And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
" That stand'st between her father's ground and mine;
" Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
" Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne. [Wall *holds up his fingers.*

" Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
" But what see I? No Thisby do I see.
" O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss;
"'Curst be thy stones for thus deceiving me!"

The. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

Pyr. No, in truth, sir, he should not. *Deceiving me,* is Thisby's cue: she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will fall pat as I told you:—Yonder she comes.

Enter THISBE.

This. " O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,
" For parting my fair Pyramus and me:
" My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones;
" Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee."
Pyr. " I see a voice: now will I to the chink,
" To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face.
" Thisby!"
This. " My love! thou art my love, I think."
Pyr. " Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace;
" And like Limander am I trusty still."
This. " And I like Helen, till the fates me kill."
Pyr. " Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true."
This. " As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you."
Pyr. " O, kiss me through the hole of this vile wall."
This. " I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all."

Pyr. "Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?"

This. "Tide life, tide death, I come without delay."

Wall. "Thus have I, wall, my part discharged so;
"And, being done, thus wall away doth go."

[*Exeunt* Wall, PYRAMUS, *and* THISBE.

The. Now is the mural down between the two neighbours.

Dem. No remedy, my lord, when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.

Hip. This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

The. The best in this kind are but shadows: and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.

Hip. It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

The. If we imagine no worse of them, than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a moon and a lion.

Enter Lion *and* Moonshine.

Lion. "You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
"The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
"May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,
"When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
"Then know, that I, one Snug the joiner, am
"A lion fell, nor else no lion's dam:
"For if I should as lion come in strife
"Into this place, 'twere pity on my life."

The. A very gentle beast and of a good conscience.

Dem. The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.

Lys. This lion is a very fox for his valour.

The. True; and a goose for his discretion.

Dem. Not so, my lord: for his valour cannot carry his discretion; and the fox carries the goose.

The. His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour; for the goose carries not the fox. It is well: leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

Moon. "This lantern doth the horned moon present:"

Dem. He should have worn the horns on his head.

The. He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible within the circumference.

Moon. "This lantern doth the horned moon present;

"Myself the man i'the moon do seem to be."

The. This is the greatest error of all the rest: the man should be put into the lantern: How is it else the man i'the moon?

Dem. He dares not come there for the candle: for, you see, it is already in snuff.[4]

Hip. I am aweary of this moon: Would, he would change!

The. It appears, by his small light of discretion, that he is in the wane: but yet, in courtesy, in all reason, we must stay the time.

Lys. Proceed, moon.

Moon. All that I have to say, is, to tell you, that the lantern is the moon; I, the man in the moon;

[4] In anger; a quibble.

this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

Dem. Why, all these should be in the lantern; for they are in the moon. But, silence; here comes Thisbe.

Enter THISBE.

This. "This is old Ninny's tomb: Where is my love?

Lion. "Oh—."

[*The* Lion *roars.*—THISBE *runs off.*

Dem. Well roared, lion.

The. Well run, Thisbe.

Hip. Well shone, moon.—Truly, the moon shines with a good grace.

The. Well moused, lion.

[*The* Lion *tears* THISBE'S *mantle, and exit.*

Dem. And so comes Pyramus.

Lys. And then the moon vanishes.

Enter PYRAMUS.

Pyr. "Sweet moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;

"I thank thee, moon, for shining now so bright:

"For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering streams,

"I trust to taste of truest Thisby's sight.

"But stay;—O spite!

"But mark;—Poor knight,

"What dreadful dole is here?

"Eyes, do you see?

"How can it be?

"O dainty duck! O dear!

" Thy mantle good,
" What, stain'd with blood?
" Approach, ye furies fell!
" O fates! come, come;
" Cut thread and thrum;[4]
" Quail, crush, conclude, and quell![5]

The. This passion, and the death of a dear friend, would go near to make a man look sad.

Hip. Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

Pyr. " O, wherefore, nature, didst thou lions frame?
" Since lion vile hath here deflour'd my dear:
" Which is—no, no—which was the fairest dame,
" That liv'd, that lov'd, that lik'd, that look'd with cheer.[6]
" Come, tears, confound;
" Out, sword, and wound
" The pap of Pyramus:
" Ay, that left pap,
" Where heart doth hop:
" Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.
" Now am I dead,
" Now am I fled;
" My soul is in the sky:
" Tongue, lose thy light!
" Moon, take thy flight!
" Now die, die, die, die, die.

[*Dies.—Exit* Moonshine.

Dem. No die, but an ace, for him; for he is but one.

[4] Coarse yarn.
[5] Destroy. [6] Countenance.

Lys. Less than an ace, man; for he is dead; he is nothing.

The. With the help of a surgeon, he might yet recover, and prove an ass.

Hip. How chance moonshine is gone, before Thisbe comes back and finds her lover?

The. She will find him by star-light.—Here she comes; and her passion ends the play.

Enter THISBE.

Hip. Methinks, she should not use a long one, for such a Pyramus: I hope, she will be brief.

Dem. A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better.

Lys. She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

Dem. And thus she moans, *videlicet*.——

This. "Asleep, my love?
"What, dead, my dove?
"O Pyramus, arise,
"Speak, speak. Quite dumb?
"Dead, dead? A tomb
"Must cover thy sweet eyes.
"These lily brows,
"This cherry nose,
"These yellow cowslip cheeks,
"Are gone, are gone:
"Lovers, make moan!
"His eyes were green as leeks.
"O sisters three,
"Come, come, to me,
"With hands as pale as milk;

" Lay them in gore,
" Since you have shore
" With shears his thread of silk.
" Tongue, not a word:—
" Come, trusty sword;
" Come, blade, my breast imbrue:
" And farewell, friends;—
" Thus Thisby ends:
" Adieu, adieu, adieu." [*Dies.*

The. Moonshine, and lion are left to bury the dead.

Dem. Ay, and wall too.

Bot. No, I assure you; the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance, between two of our company?

The. No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse; for when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it, had play'd Pyramus, and hanged himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably discharged. But come, your Bergomask: let your epilogue alone. [*Here a dance of* Clowns.

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:—
Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy time.
I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn,
As much as we this night have overwatch'd.
This palpable-gross play hath well beguil'd
The heavy gait[7] of night.—Sweet friends, to bed.—
A fortnight hold we this solemnity,
In nightly revels, and new jollity. [*Exeunt.*

[7] Progress.

SCENE II.

Enter PUCK.

Puck. Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf behowls the moon;
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
All with weary task fordone.[8]
Now the wasted brands do glow,
Whilst the scritch-owl, scritching loud,
Puts the wretch, that lies in woe,
In remembrance of a shroud.
Now it is the time of night,
That the graves, all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide:
And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecat's team,
From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolick; not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:
I am sent, with broom, before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.

Enter OBERON *and* TITANIA, *with their Train.*

Obe. Through this house give glimmering light,
By the dead and drowsy fire:
Every elf, and fairy sprite,
Hop as light as bird from brier;

[8] Overcome.

And this ditty, after me,
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

Tita. First, rehearse this song by rote:
To each word a warbling note,
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,
Will we sing, and bless this place.

SONG, AND DANCE.

Obe. Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be;
And the issue, there create,
Ever shall be fortunate.
So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be:
And the blots of nature's hand
Shall not in their issue stand;
Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,
Nor mark prodigious,[9] such as are
Despised in nativity,
Shall upon their children be.—
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gait;[1]
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace with sweet peace:
E'er shall it in safety rest,
And the owner of it blest.
Trip away;
Make no stay;
Meet me all by break of day.

[*Exeunt* OBERON, TITANIA, *and Train.*

9 Portentous. 1 Way.

Puck. *If we shadows have offended,*
Think but this, (and all is mended,)
That you have but slumber'd here,
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend;
If you pardon, we will mend.
And, as I'm an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends, ere long:
Else the Puck a liar call.
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends. [Exit

Wild and fantastical as this play is, all the parts in their various modes are well written, and give the kind of pleasure which the author designed. Fairies in his time were much in fashion; common tradition had made them familiar, and Spencer's poem had made them great. JOHNSON.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Ferdinand, *King of Navarre.*

Biron,
Longaville, } *Lords, attending on the King.*
Dumain,

Boyet, } *Lords, attending on the Princess of*
Mercade, } *France.*

Don Adriano de Armado, *a fantastical Spaniard.*
Sir Nathaniel, *a Curate.*
Holofernes, *a Schoolmaster.*
Dull, *a Constable.*
Costard, *a Clown.*
Moth, *Page to Armado.*
A Forester.

Princess of France.

Rosaline,
Maria, } *Ladies, attending on the Princess.*
Katharine,

Jaquenetta, *a country Wench.*

Officers and others, attendants on the King and Princess.

SCENE, *Navarre.*

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Navarre. *A Park, with a Palace in it.*

Enter the King, BIRON, LONGAVILLE, *and* DUMAIN.

King.

LET fame, that all hunt after in their lives,
Live register'd upon our brazen tombs,
And then grace us in the disgrace of death;
When, spite of cormorant devouring time,
The endeavour of this present breath may buy
That honour, which shall bate his scythe's keen edge,
And make us heirs of all eternity.
Therefore, brave conquerors!—for so you are,
That war against your own affections,
And the huge army of the world's desires,—
Our late edict shall strongly stand in force:
Navarre shall be the wonder of the world;
Our court shall be a little Academe,
Still and contemplative in living art.
You three, Birón, Dumain, and Longaville,
Have sworn for three years' term to live with me,
My fellow-scholars, and to keep those statutes,
That are recorded in this schedule here:

Your oaths are past, and now subscribe your names;
That his own hand may strike his honour down,
That violates the smallest branch herein:
If you are arm'd to do, as sworn to do,
Subscribe to your deep oath, and keep it too.

Long. I am resolv'd: 'tis but a three years' fast;
The mind shall banquet, though the body pine:
Fat paunches have lean pates; and dainty bits
Make rich the ribs, but bank'rout quite the wits.

Dum. My loving lord, Dumain is mortified;
The grosser manner of these world's delights
He throws upon the gross world's baser slaves:
To love, to wealth, to pomp, I pine and die;
With all these living in philosophy.

Biron. I can but say their protestation over,
So much, dear liege, I have already sworn,
That is, To live and study here three years.
But there are other strict observances:
As, not to see a woman in that term;
Which, I hope well, is not enrolled there:
And, one day in a week to touch no food;
And but one meal on every day beside;
The which, I hope, is not enrolled there:
And then, to sleep but three hours in the night,
And not be seen to wink of all the day;
(When I was wont to think no harm all night,
And make a dark night too of half the day;)
Which, I hope well, is not enrolled there:
O, these are barren tasks, too hard to keep;
Not to see ladies, study, fast, not sleep.

King. Your oath is pass'd to pass away from these.

Biron. Let me say no, my liege, an if you please;

I only swore, to study with your grace,
And stay here in your court for three years' space.
Long. You swore to that, Biron, and to the rest.
Biron. By yea and nay, sir, then I swore in jest.—
What is the end of study? let me know.
King. Why, that to know, which else we should not know.
Biron. Things hid and barr'd, you mean, from common sense?
King. Ay, that is study's god-like recompense.
Biron. Come on then, I will swear to study so,
To know the thing I am forbid to know:
As thus—To study where I well may dine,
When I to feast expressly am forbid;
Or, study where to meet some mistress fine,
When mistresses from common sense are hid:
Or, having sworn too hard-a-keeping oath,
Study to break it, and not break my troth.
If study's gain be thus, and this be so,
Study knows that, which yet it doth not know;
Swear me to this, and I will ne'er say, no.
King. These be the stops that hinder study quite,
And train our intellects to vain delight.
Biron. Why, all delights are vain; but that most vain,
Which, with pain purchas'd, doth inherit pain:
As, painfully to pore upon a book,
To seek the light of truth; while truth the while
Doth falsely[1] blind the eyesight of his look:
Light, seeking light, doth light of light beguile:
So, ere you find where light in darkness lies,
Your light grows dark by losing of your eyes.

[1] Dishonestly, treacherously.

Study me how to please the eye indeed,
By fixing it upon a fairer eye;
Who dazzling so, that eye shall be his heed,
And give him light that was it blinded by.
Study is like the heaven's glorious sun,
That will not be deep-search'd with saucy looks;
Small have continual plodders ever won,
Save base authority from others' books.
These earthly godfathers of heaven's lights,
That give a name to every fixed star,
Have no more profit of their shining nights,
Than those that walk, and wot not what they are.
Too much to know, is, to know nought but fame;
And every godfather can give a name.

King. How well he's read, to reason against reading!

Dum. Proceeded well, to stop all good proceeding!

Long. He weeds the corn, and still lets grow the weeding.

Biron. The spring is near, when green geese are a breeding.

Dum. How follows that?

Biron. Fit in his place and time.

Dum. In reason nothing.

Biron. Something then in rhyme.

Long. Biron is like an envious sneaping[2] frost,
That bites the first-born infants of the spring.

Biron. Well, say I am; why should proud summer boast,
Before the birds have any cause to sing?
Why should I joy in an abortive birth?

[2] Nipping.

At Christmas I no more desire a rose
Than wish a snow in May's new-fangled shows;[3]
But like of each thing, that in season grows.
So you, to study now it is too late,
Climb o'er the house to unlock the little gate.

King. Well, sit you out: go home, Biron; adieu!

Biron. No, my good lord; I have sworn to stay with you:
And, though I have for barbarism spoke more,
Than for that angel knowledge you can say,
Yet confident I'll keep what I have swore,
And bide the penance of each three years' day.
Give me the paper, let me read the same;
And to the strict'st decrees I'll write my name.

King. How well this yielding rescues thee from shame!

Biron. [*Reads.*] Item, *That no woman shall come within a mile of my court.*—
And hath this been proclaim'd?

Long. Four days ago.

Biron. Let's see the penalty.
[*Reads,*]—*On pain of losing her tongue.*—
Who devis'd this?

Long. Marry, that did I.

Biron. Sweet lord, and why?

Long. To fright them hence with that dread penalty.

Biron. A dangerous law against gentility.

[*Reads.*] Item, *If any man be seen to talk with a woman within the term of three years, he shall endure such publick shame as the rest of the court can possibly devise.*—

[3] Games, sports.

This article, my liege, yourself must break;
For, well you know, here comes in embassy
The French King's daughter, with yourself to speak,—
A maid of grace, and cómplete majesty,—
About surrender-up of Aquitain
To her decrepit, sick, and bed-rid father:
Therefore this article is made in vain,
Or vainly comes the admired princess hither.

King. What say you, lords? why, this was quite forgot.

Biron. So study evermore is overshot;
While it doth study to have what it would,
It doth forget to do the thing it should:
And when it hath the thing it hunteth most,
'Tis won, as towns with fire; so won, so lost.

King. We must, of force, dispense with this decree;
She must lie[4] here on mere necessity.

Biron. Necessity will make us all forsworn
Three thousand times within this three years' space:
For every man with his affects is born;
Not by might master'd, but by special grace:
If I break faith, this word shall speak for me,
I am forsworn on mere necessity.—
So to the laws at large I write my name:
[*Subscribes.*
And he, that breaks them in the least degree,
Stands in attainder of eternal shame:
Suggestions[5] are to others, as to me;
But, I believé, although I seem so loth,
I am the last that will last keep his oath.

[4] Reside. [5] Temptations.

But is there no quick[6] recreation granted?

King. Ay, that there is: our court, you know, is haunted
With a refined traveller of Spain;
A man in all the world's new fashion planted,
That hath a mint of phrases in his brain:
One, whom the musick of his own vain tongue
Doth ravish, like enchanting harmony;
A man of complements, whom right and wrong
Have chose as umpire of their mutiny:
This child of fancy, that Armado hight,[7]
For interim to our studies, shall relate,
In high-born words, the worth of many a knight
From tawny Spain, lost in the world's debate.
How you delight, my lords, I know not, I;
But, I protest, I love to hear him lie,
And I will use him for my minstrelsy.

Biron. Armado is a most illustrious wight,
A man of fire-new words, fashion's own knight.

Long. Costard the swain, and he, shall be our sport;
And, so to study, three years is but short.

Enter DULL, *with a letter, and* COSTARD.

Dull. Which is the duke's own person?

Biron. This, fellow; What would'st?

Dull. I myself reprehend his own person, for I am his grace's tharborough:[8] but I would see his own person in flesh and blood.

Biron. This is he.

[6] Lively, spritely. [7] Called.
[8] *i. e.* third-borough, a peace-officer.

Dull. Signior Arme — Arme — commends you. There's villainy abroad; this letter will tell you more.

Cost. Sir, the contempts thereof are as touching me.

King. A letter from the magnificent Armado.

Biron. How low soever the matter, I hope in God for high words.

Long. A high hope for a low having: God grant us patience!

Biron. To hear? or forbear hearing?

Long. To hear meekly, sir, and to laugh moderately; or to forbear both.

Biron. Well, sir, be it as the style shall give us cause to climb in the merriness.

Cost. The matter is to me, sir, as concerning Jaquenetta. The manner of it is, I was taken with the manner.[9]

Biron. In what manner?

Cost. In manner and form following, sir; all those three: I was seen with her in the manor house, sitting with her upon the form, and taken following her into the park; which, put together, is, in manner and form following. Now, sir, for the manner,—it is the manner of a man to speak to a woman: for the form,—in some form.

Biron. For the following, sir?

Cost. As it shall follow in my correction; And God defend the right!

King. Will you hear this letter with attention?

Biron. As we would hear an oracle.

Cost. Such is the simplicity of man to hearken after the flesh.

[9] In the fact.

King. [*Reads.*] *Great deputy, the welkin's vice-gerent, and sole dominator of Navarre, my soul's earth's God, and body's fostering patron,—*

Cost. Not a word of Costard yet.

King. *So it is,—*

Cost. It may be so: but if he say it is so, he is, in telling true, but so, so.

King. Peace.

Cost. —be to me, and every man that dares not fight!

King. No words.

Cost. —of other men's secrets, I beseech you.

King. *So it is, besieged with sable-coloured melancholy, I did commend the black-oppressing humour to the most wholesome physick of thy health-giving air; and, as I am a gentleman, betook myself to walk. The time when? About the sixth hour; when beasts most graze, birds best peck, and men sit down to that nourishment which is called supper. So much for the time when: Now for the ground which; which, I mean, I walked upon: it is ycleped thy park. Then for the place where; where, I mean, I did encounter that obscene and most preposterous event, that draweth from my snow-white pen the ebon-coloured ink, which here thou viewest, beholdest, surveyest, or seest: But to the place, where,—It standeth north-north-east and by east from the west corner of thy curious-knotted garden: There did I see that low-spirited swain, that base minnow of thy mirth,*

Cost. Me.

King. *—that unletter'd small-knowing soul,*

Cost. Me.

King. —*that shallow vassal,*

Cost. Still me.

King. —*which, as I remember, hight Costard,*

Cost. O me!

King. —*sorted and consorted, contrary to thy established proclaimed edict and continent canon, with—with,—O with—but with this I passion to say wherewith.*

Cost. With a wench.

King. —*with a child of our grandmother Eve, a female; or, for thy more sweet understanding, a woman. Him I (as my ever-esteemed duty pricks me on) have sent to thee, to receive the meed of punishment, by thy sweet grace's officer, Antony Dull; a man of good repute, carriage, bearing, and estimation.*

Dull. Me, an't shall please you; I am Antony Dull.

King. *For Jaquenetta, (so is the weaker vessel called, which I apprehended with the aforesaid swain,) I keep her as a vessel of thy law's fury; and shall, at the least of thy sweet notice, bring her to trial. Thine, in all compliments of devoted and heart-burning heat of duty,* DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO.

Biron. This is not so well as I looked for, but the best that ever I heard.

King. Ay, the best for the worst. But, sirrah, what say you to this?

Cost. Sir, I confess the wench.

King. Did you hear the proclamation?

Cost. I do confess much of the hearing it, but little of the marking of it.

King. It was proclaimed a year's imprisonment, to be taken with a wench.

Cost. I was taken with none, sir, I was taken with a damosel.

King. Well, it was proclaimed damosel.

Cost. This was no damosel neither, sir; she was a virgin.

King. It is so varied too; for it was proclaimed, virgin.

Cost. If it were, I deny her virginity; I was taken with a maid.

King. This maid will not serve your turn, sir.

Cost. This maid will serve my turn, sir.

King. Sir, I will pronounce your sentence; You shall fast a week with bran and water.

Cost. I had rather pray a month with mutton and porridge.

King. And Don Armado shall be your keeper.—
My lord Biron see him deliver'd o'er.—
And go we, lords, to put in practice that
Which each to other hath so strongly sworn.—
[*Exeunt* King, LONGAVILLE, *and* DUMAIN.

Biron. I'll lay my head to any good man's hat,
These oaths and laws will prove an idle scorn.—
Sirrah, come on.

Cost. I suffer for the truth, sir: for true it is, I was taken with Jaquenetta, and Jaquenetta is a true girl; and therefore, Welcome the sour cup of prosperity! Affliction may one day smile again, and till then, Sit thee down, sorrow! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Another part of the same. Armado's *House.*

Enter ARMADO *and* MOTH.

Arm. Boy, what sign is it, when a man of great spirit grows melancholy?

Moth. A great sign, sir, that he will look sad.

Arm. Why, sadness is one and the self-same thing, dear imp.

Moth. No, no; O lord, sir, no.

Arm. How canst thou part sadness and melancholy, my tender juvenal?[1]

Moth. By a familiar demonstration of the working, my tough senior.

Arm. Why tough senior? why tough senior?

Moth. Why, tender juvenal? why tender juvenal?

Arm. I spoke it, tender juvenal, as a congruent epitheton, appertaining to thy young days, which we may nominate tender.

Moth. And I, tough senior, as an appertinent title to your old time, which we may name tough.

Arm. Pretty, and apt.

Moth. How mean you, sir? I pretty, and my saying apt? or I apt, and my saying pretty?

Arm. Thou pretty, because little.

Moth. Little pretty, because little: Wherefore apt?

Arm. And therefore apt, because quick.

Moth. Speak you this in my praise, master?

Arm. In thy condign praise.

[1] Young man.

Moth. I will praise an eel with the same praise.

Arm. What? that an eel is ingenious?

Moth. That an eel is quick.

Arm. I do say, thou art quick in answers: Thou heatest my blood.

Moth. I am answered, sir.

Arm. I love not to be crossed.

Moth. He speaks the mere contrary, crosses[a] love not him. [*Aside.*

Arm. I have promised to study three years with the duke.

Moth. You may do it in an hour, sir.

Arm. Impossible.

Moth. How many is one thrice told?

Arm. I am ill at reckoning, it fitteth the spirit of a tapster.

Moth. You are a gentleman, and a gamester, sir.

Arm. I confess both; they are both the varnish of a complete man.

Moth. Then, I am sure, you know how much the gross sum of deuce-ace amounts to.

Arm. It doth amount to one more than two.

Moth. Which the base vulgar do call, three.

Arm. True.

Moth. Why, sir, is this such a piece of study? Now here is three studied, ere you'll thrice wink: and how easy it is to put years to the word three, and study three years in two words, the dancing horse will tell you.

Arm. A most fine figure!

[a] The name of a coin once current.

Moth. To prove you a cypher. [*Aside.*

Arm. I will hereupon confess, I am in love: and, as it is base for a soldier to love, so am I in love with a base wench. If drawing my sword against the humour of affection would deliver me from the reprobate thought of it, I would take desire prisoner, and ransom him to any French courtier for a new devised courtesy. I think scorn to sigh; methinks, I should out-swear Cupid. Comfort me, boy: What great men have been in love?

Moth. Hercules, master.

Arm. Most sweet Hercules!—More authority, dear boy, name more; and, sweet my child, let them be men of good repute and carriage.

Moth. Sampson, master: he was a man of good carriage, great carriage; for he carried the town-gates on his back, like a porter: and he was in love.

Arm. O well-knit Sampson! strong-jointed Sampson! I do excel thee in my rapier, as much as thou didst me in carrying gates. I am in love too,—Who was Sampson's love, my dear Moth?

Moth. A woman, master.

Arm. Of what complexion?

Moth. Of all the four, or the three, or the two; or one of the four.

Arm. Tell me precisely of what complexion?

Moth. Of the sea-water green, sir.

Arm. Is that one of the four complexions?

Moth. As I have read, sir; and the best of them too.

Arm. Green, indeed, is the colour of lovers: but to have a love of that colour, methinks, Sampson had

small reason for it. He, surely, affected her for her wit.

Moth. It was so, sir; for she had a green wit.

Arm. My love is most immaculate white and red.

Moth. Most maculate thoughts, master, are masked under such colours.

Arm. Define, define, well-educated infant.

Moth. My father's wit, and my mother's tongue, assist me!

Arm. Sweet invocation of a child; most pretty, and pathetical!

Moth. If she be made of white and red,
Her faults will ne'er be known;
For blushing cheeks by faults are bred,
And fears by pale-white shown:
Then, if she fear, or be to blame,
By this you shall not know;
For still her cheeks possess the same,
Which native she doth owe.[3]

A dangerous rhyme, master, against the reason of white and red.

Arm. Is there not a ballad, boy, of the King and the Beggar?

Moth. The world was very guilty of such a ballad some three ages since: but, I think, now 'tis not to be found; or, if it were, it would neither serve for the writing, nor the tune.

Arm. I will have the subject newly writ o'er, that I may example my digression[4] by some mighty precedent. Boy, I do love that country girl, that I took

[3] Of which she is naturally possessed.

[4] Transgression.

in the park with the rational hind Costard; she deserves well.

Moth. To be whipped; and yet a better love than my master. [*Aside.*

Arm. Sing, boy; my spirit grows heavy in love.

Moth. And that's great marvel, loving a light wench.

Arm. I say, sing.

Moth. Forbear till this company be past.

Enter DULL, COSTARD, *and* JAQUENETTA.

Dull. Sir, the duke's pleasure is, that you keep Costard safe: and you must let him take no delight, nor no penance; but a' must fast three days a-week: For this damsel, I must keep her at the park; she is allowed for the day-woman.[5] Fare you well.

Arm. I do betray myself with blushing.—Maid.

Jaq. Man.

Arm. I will visit thee at the lodge.

Jaq. That's hereby.

Arm. I know where it is situate.

Jaq. Lord, how wise you are!

Arm. I will tell thee wonders.

Jaq. With that face?

Arm. I love thee.

Jaq. So I heard you say.

Arm. And so farewell.

Jaq. Fair weather after you!

Dull. Come, Jaquenetta, away.

[*Exeunt* DULL *and* JAQUENETTA.

[5] Dairy-woman.

Arm. Villain, thou shalt fast for thy offences, ere thou be pardoned.

Cost. Well, sir, I hope, when I do it, I shall do it on a full stomach.

Arm. Thou shalt be heavily punished.

Cost. I am more bound to you, than your fellows, for they are but lightly rewarded.

Arm. Take away this villain; shut him up.

Moth. Come, you transgressing slave; away.

Cost. Let me not be pent up, sir; I will fast, being loose.

Moth. No, sir; that were fast and loose: thou shalt to prison.

Cost. Well, if ever I do see the merry days of desolation that I have seen, some shall see—

Moth. What shall some see?

Cost. Nay, nothing, master Moth, but what they look upon. It is not for prisoners to be too silent in their words; and, therefore, I will say nothing: I thank God, I have as little patience as another man; and, therefore I can be quiet.

[*Exeunt* MOTH *and* COSTARD.

Arm. I do affect[6] the very ground, which is base, where her shoe, which is baser, guided by her foot, which is basest, doth tread. I shall be forsworn, (which is a great argument of falshood,) if I love: And how can that be true love, which is falsely attempted? Love is a familiar; love is a devil: there is no evil angel but love. Yet Sampson was so tempted: and he had an excellent strength: yet was Solomon so seduced; and he had a very good wit.

[6] Love.

Cupid's butt-shaft[7] is too hard for Hercules' club, and therefore too much odds for a Spaniard's rapier. The first and second cause will not serve my turn; the passado he respects not, the duello he regards not: his disgrace is to be called boy; but his glory is, to subdue men. Adieu, valour! rust, rapier! be still, drum! for your manager is in love; yea, he loveth. Assist me some extemporal god of rhyme, for, I am sure, I shall turn sonneteer. Devise wit; write pen; for I am for whole volumes in folio.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. Another part of the same. A Pavilion and Tents at a distance.

Enter the Princess *of* France, ROSALINE, MARIA, KATHARINE, BOYET, *Lords, and other Attendants.*

Boyet. Now, madam, summon up your dearest[8] spirits:
Consider who the king your father sends;
To whom he sends; and what's his embassy:
Yourself, held precious in the world's esteem;
To parley with the sole inheritor
Of all perfections that a man may owe,
Matchless Navarre; the plea of no less weight
Than Aquitain; a dowry for a queen.
Be now as prodigal of all dear grace,
As nature was in making graces dear,
When she did starve the general world beside,

[7] Arrow to shoot at butts with. [8] Best.

And prodigally gave them all to you.

Prin. Good lord Boyet, my beauty, though but mean,
Needs not the painted flourish of your praise;
Beauty is bought by judgment of the eye,
Not utter'd by base sale of chapmen's tongues:
I am less proud to hear you tell my worth,
Than you much willing to be counted wise
In spending your wit in the praise of mine.
But now to task the tasker,—Good Boyet,
You are not ignorant, all-telling fame
Doth noise abroad, Navarre hath made a vow,
Till painful study shall out-wear three years,
No woman may approach his silent court:
Therefore to us seemeth it a needful course,
Before we enter his forbidden gates,
To know his pleasure; and in that behalf,
Bold of your worthiness, we single you
As our best-moving fair solicitor:
Tell him, the daughter of the king of France,
On serious business, craving quick despatch,
Impórtunes personal conference with his grace.
Haste, signify so much; while we attend,
Like humbly-visag'd suitors, his high will.

Boy. Proud of employment, willingly I go. [*Exit.*

Prin. All pride is willing pride, and yours is so.—
Who are the votaries, my loving lords,
That are vow-fellows with this virtuous duke?

1 *Lord.* Longaville is one.

Prin. Know you the man?

Mar. I know him, madam; at a marriage feast,
Between lord Perigort and the beauteous heir

Of Jaques Falconbridge solémnized,
In Normandy saw I this Longaville:
A man of sovereign parts he is esteem'd;
Well fitted in the arts, glorious in arms:
Nothing becomes him ill, that he would well.
The only soil of his fair virtue's gloss,
(If virtue's gloss will stain with any soil,)
Is a sharp wit match'd with too blunt a will;
Whose edge hath power to cut, whose will still wills
It should none spare that come within his power.

Prin. Some merry mocking lord, belike; is't so?

Mar. They say so most, that most his humours know.

Prin. Such short-liv'd wits do wither as they grow.
Who are the rest?

Kath. The young Dumain, a well-accomplish'd youth,
Of all that virtue love for virtue lov'd:
Most power to do most harm, least knowing ill;
For he hath wit to make an ill shape good,
And shape to win grace though he had no wit.
I saw him at the duke Alençon's once;
And much too little of that good I saw,
Is my report, to his great worthiness.

Ros. Another of these students at that time
Was there with him: if I have heard a truth,
Biron they call him; but a merrier man,
Within the limit of becoming mirth,
I never spent an hour's talk withal:
His eye begets occasion for his wit;
For every object that the one doth catch,
The other turns to a mirth-moving jest;

Which his fair tongue (conceit's expositor,)
Delivers in such apt and gracious words,
That aged ears play truant at his tales,
And younger hearings are quite ravished;
So sweet and voluble is his discourse.

Prin. God bless my ladies! are they all in love;
That every one her own hath garnished
With such bedecking ornaments of praise?

Mar. Here comes Boyet.

Re-enter BOYET.

Prin. Now, what admittance, lord?

Boyet. Navarre had notice of your fair approach;
And he, and his competitors[9] in oath,
Were all address'd[1] to meet you, gentle lady,
Before I came. Marry, thus much I have learnt,
He rather means to lodge you in the field,
(Like one that comes here to besiege his court,)
Than seek a dispensation for his oath,
To let you enter his unpeopled house.
Here comes Navarre. [*The Ladies mask.*

Enter KING, LONGAVILLE, DUMAIN, BIRON, *and Attendants.*

King. Fair princess, welcome to the court of Navarre.

Prin. Fair, I give you back again; and, welcome I have not yet: the roof of this court is too high to be yours; and welcome to the wild fields too base to be mine.

King. You shall be welcome, madam, to my court.

[9] Confederates. [1] Prepared.

Prin. I will be welcome then; conduct me thither.
King. Hear me, dear lady; I have sworn an oath.
Prin. Our Lady help my lord! he'll be forsworn.
King. Not for the world, fair madam, by my will.
Prin. Why, will shall break it; will, and nothing else.
King. Your ladyship is ignorant what it is.
Prin. Were my lord so, his ignorance were wise,
Where[2] now his knowledge must prove ignorance.
I hear, your grace hath sworn-out house-keeping:
'Tis deadly sin to keep that oath, my lord,
And sin to break it:
But pardon me, I am too sudden-bold;
To teach a teacher ill beseemeth me.
Vouchsafe to read the purpose of my coming,
And suddenly resolve me in my suit. [*Gives a paper.*
King. Madam, I will, if suddenly I may.
Prin. You will the sooner, that I were away;
For you'll prove perjur'd, if you make me stay.
Biron. Did not I dance with you in Brabant once?
Ros. Did not I dance with you in Brabant once?
Biron. I know, you did.
Ros. How needless was it then
To ask the question!
Biron. You must not be so quick.
Ros. 'Tis 'long of you that spur me with such questions.
Biron. Your wit's too hot, it speeds too fast, 'twill tire.
Ros. Not till it leave the rider in the mire.
Biron. What time o' day?

[2] Whereas.

Ros. The hour that fools should ask.
Biron. Now fair befall your mask!
Ros. Fair fall the face it covers!
Biron. And send you many lovers!
Ros. Amen, so you be none.
Biron. Nay, then will I be gone.
King. Madam, your father here doth intimate
The payment of a hundred thousand crowns;
Being but the one half of an entire sum,
Disbursed by my father in his wars.
But say, that he, or we, (as neither have,)
Receiv'd that sum; yet there remains unpaid
A hundred thousand more; in surety of the which,
One part of Aquitain is bound to us,
Although not valued to the money's worth.
If then the king your father will restore
But that one half which is unsatisfied,
We will give up our right in Aquitain,
And hold fair friendship with his majesty.
But that, it seems, he little purposeth,
For here he doth demand to have repaid
An hundred thousand crowns; and not demands,
On payment of a hundred thousand crowns,
To have his title live in Aquitain;
Which we much rather had depart[3] withal,
And have the money by our father lent,
Than Aquitain so gelded as it is.
Dear princess, were not his requests so far
From reason's yielding, your fair self should make
A yielding, 'gainst some reason, in my breast,
And go well satisfied to France again.

[3] Part.

Prin. You do the king my father too much wrong,
And wrong the reputation of your name,
In so unseeming to confess receipt
Of that which hath so faithfully been paid.

King. I do protest, I never heard of it;
And, if you prove it, I'll repay it back,
Or yield up Aquitain.

Prin. We arrest your word:—
Boyet, you can produce acquittances,
For such a sum, from special officers
Of Charles his father.

King. Satisfy me so.

Boyet. So please your grace, the packet is not come,
Where that and other specialties are bound;
To-morrow you shall have a sight of them.

King. It shall suffice me: at which interview,
All liberal reason I will yield unto.
Mean time, receive such welcome at my hand,
As honour, without breach of honour, may
Make tender of to thy true worthiness:
You may not come, fair princess, in my gates;
But here without you shall be so receiv'd,
As you shall deem yourself lodg'd in my heart,
Though so denied fair harbour in my house.
Your own good thoughts excuse me, and farewell:
To-morrow shall we visit you again.

Prin. Sweet health and fair desires consort your grace!

King. Thy own wish wish I thee in every place!
[*Exeunt* King *and his Train.*

Biron. Lady, I will commend you to my own heart.

Ros. 'Pray you, do my commendations; I would be glad to see it.

Biron. I would, you heard it groan.

Ros. Is the fool sick?

Biron. Sick at heart.

Ros. Alack, let it blood.

Biron. Would that do it good?

Ros. My physick says, I.[4]

Biron. Will you prick't with your eye?

Ros. No *poynt*,[5] with my knife.

Biron. Now, God save thy life!

Ros. And yours from long living!

Biron. I cannot stay thanksgiving. [*Retiring.*

Dum. Sir, I pray you, a word: What lady is that same?

Boyet. The heir of Alençon, Rosaline her name.

Dum. A gallant lady! Monsieur, fare you well. [*Exit.*

Long. I beseech you a word; What is she in the white?

Boyet. A woman sometimes, an you saw her in the light.

Long. Perchance, light in the light: I desire her name.

Boyet. She hath but one for herself; to desire that, were a shame.

Long. Pray you, sir, whose daughter?

Boyet. Her mother's, I have heard.

Long. God's blessing on your beard!

Boyet. Good sir, be not offended:
She is an heir of Falconbridge.

[4] Aye, yes. [5] A French particle of negation.

Long. Nay, my choler is ended.
She is a most sweet lady.

Boyet. Not unlike, sir; that may be.
[*Exit.* LONG.

Biron. What's her name, in the cap?

Boyet. Katharine, by good hap.

Biron. Is she wedded, or no?

Boyet. To her will, sir, or so.

Biron. You are welcome, sir; adieu!

Boyet. Farewell to me, sir, and welcome to you.
[*Exit* BIRON.—*Ladies unmask.*

Mar. That last is Biron, the merry mad-cap lord;
Not a word with him but a jest.

Boyet. And every jest but a word.

Prin. It was well done of you to take him at his word.

Boyet. I was as willing to grapple, as he was to board.

Mar. Two hot sheeps, marry!

Boyet. And wherefore not ships?
No sheep, sweet lamb, unless we feed on your lips.

Mar. You sheep, and I pasture; Shall that finish the jest?

Boyet. So you grant pasture for me.
[*Offering to kiss her.*

Mar. Not so, gentle beast;
My lips are no common, though several[6] they be.

Boyet. Belonging to whom?

Mar. To my fortunes and me.

Prin. Good wits will be jangling: but, gentles, agree:

[6] A quibble, several signified uninclosed lands.

The civil war of wits were much better used
On Navarre and his book-men; for here 'tis abused.
Boyet. If my observation, (which very seldom lies,)
By the heart's still rhetorick, disclosed with eyes,
Deceive me not now, Navarre is infected.
Prin. With what?
Boyet. With that which we lovers entitle, affected.
Prin. Your reason?
Boyet. Why, all his behaviours did make their retire
To the court of his eye, peeping thorough desire:
His heart, like an agate, with your print impressed,
Proud with his form, in his eye pride expressed:
His tongue, all impatient to speak and not see,
Did stumble with haste in his eye-sight to be;
All senses to that sense did make their repair,
To feel only looking on fairest of fair:
Methought, all his senses were lock'd in his eye,
As jewels in chrystal for some prince to buy;
Who, tend'ring their own worth, from where they were glass'd,
Did point you to buy them, along as you pass'd.
His face's own margent did quote such amazes,
That all eyes saw his eyes enchanted with gazes:
I'll give you Aquitain, and all that is his,
An you give him for my sake but one loving kiss.
Prin. Come, to our pavilion: Boyet is dispos'd—
Boyet. But to speak that in words, which his eye hath disclos'd:
I only have made a mouth of his eye,
By adding a tongue which I know will not lie.

Ros. Thou art an old love-monger, and speak'st skilfully.

Mar. He is Cupid's grandfather, and learns news of him.

Ros. Then was Venus like her mother; for her father is but grim.

Boyet. Do you hear my mad wenches?

Mar. No.

Boyet. What then, do you see?

Ros. Ay, our way to be gone.

Boyet. You are too hard for me.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. Another part of the same.

Enter ARM'ADO *and* MOTH.

Arm. Warble, child; make passionate my sense of hearing.

Moth. *Concolinel*—— [*Singing.*

Arm. Sweet air!—Go, tenderness of years; take this key, give enlargement to the swain, bring him festinately[7] hither; I must employ him in a letter to my love.

Moth. Master, will you win your love with a French brawl?[8]

Arm. How mean'st thou? brawling in French?

Moth. No, my complete master: but, to jig off a tune at the tongue's end, canary[9] to it with your

[7] Hastily. [8] A kind of dance.

[9] Canary was the name of a spritely dance.

feet, humour it with turning up your eye-lids; sigh a note, and sing a note; sometime through the throat, as if you swallowed love with singing love; sometime through the nose, as if you snuffed up love by smelling love; with your hat penthouse-like, o'er the shop of your eyes; with your arms crossed on your thin belly-doublet, like a rabbit on a spit; or your hands in your pocket, like a man after the old painting; and keep not too long in one tune, but a snip and away: These are complements, these are humours; these betray nice wenches—that would be betrayed without these; and make them men of note, (do you note, men?) that most are affected to these.

Arm. How hast thou purchased this experience?

Moth. By my penny of observation.

Arm. But O,—but O,—

Moth. —the hobby-horse is forgot.

Arm. Callest thou my love, hobby-horse?

Moth. No, master; the hobby-horse is but a colt, and your love, perhaps, a hackney. But have you forgot your love?

Arm. Almost I had.

Moth. Negligent student! learn her by heart.

Arm. By heart, and in heart, boy.

Moth. And out of heart, master: all those three I will prove.

Arm. What wilt thou prove?

Moth. A man, if I live; and this, by, in, and without, upon the instant: By heart you love her, because your heart cannot come by her: in heart you love her, because your heart is in love with her;

and out of heart you love her, being out of heart that you cannot enjoy her.

Arm. I am all these three.

Moth. And three times as much more, and yet nothing at all.

Arm. Fetch hither the swain; he must carry me a letter.

Moth. A message well sympathised; a horse to be embassador for an ass!

Arm. Ha, ha! what sayest thou?

Moth. Marry, sir, you must send the ass upon the horse, for he is very slow-gaited: But I go.

Arm. The way is but short; away.

Moth. As swift as lead, sir.

Arm. Thy meaning, pretty ingenious?
Is not lead a metal heavy, dull, and slow?

Moth. *Minimè*, honest master; or rather, master, no.

Arm. I say, lead is slow.

Moth. You are too swift,[1] sir, to say so:
Is that lead slow which is fir'd from a gun?

Arm. Sweet smoke of rhetorick!
He reputes me a cannon; and the bullet, that's he:—
I shoot thee at the swain.

Moth. Thump then, and I flee. [*Exit.*

Arm. A most acute juvenal; voluble and free of grace!
By thy favour, sweet welkin, I must sigh in thy face:

[1] Quick, ready.

Most rude melancholy, valour gives thee place.
My herald is return'd.

Re-enter MOTH *and* COSTARD.

Moth. A wonder, master; here's a Costard [2] broken in a shin.

Arm. Some enigma, some riddle: come,—thy *l'envoy*;[3]—begin.

Cost. No egma, no riddle, no *l'envoy;* no salve in the mail, sir: O, sir, plantain, a plain plantain; no *l'envoy,* no *l'envoy,* no salve, sir, but a plantain!

Arm. By virtue, thou enforcest laughter; thy silly thought, my spleen; the heaving of my lungs provokes me to ridiculous smiling: O, pardon me, my stars! Doth the inconsiderate take salve for *l'envoy,* and the word, *l'envoy,* for a salve?

Moth. Do the wise think them other? is not *l'envoy* a salve?

Arm. No, page: it is an epilogue or discourse, to make plain
Some obscure precedence that hath tofore been sain.
I will example it:
The fox, the ape, and the humble-bee,
Were still at odds, being but three.
There's the moral: Now the *l'envoy.*

Moth. I will add the *l'envoy:* Say the moral again.

Arm. The fox, the ape, and the humble-bee,
Were still at odds, being but three:

Moth. Until the goose came out of door,
And stay'd the odds by adding four.

[2] A head. [3] An old French term for concluding verses, which served either to convey the moral, or to address the poem to some person.

Now will I begin your moral, and do you follow with my *l'envoy*,

The fox, the ape, and the humble-bee,
Were still at odds, being but three:

Arm. Until the goose came out of door,
Staying the odds by adding four.

Moth. A good *l'envoy*, ending in the goose; Would you desire more?

Cost. The boy hath sold him a bargain, a goose, that's flat:—
Sir, your pennyworth is good, an your goose be fat.—
To sell a bargain well, is as cunning as fast and loose:
Let me see a fat *l'envoy*; ay, that's a fat goose.

Arm. Come hither, come hither: How did this argument begin?

Moth. By saying that a *Costard* was broken in a shin.
Then call'd you for the *l'envoy*.

Cost. True, and I for a plantain; Thus came your argument in;
Then the boy's fat *l'envoy*, the goose that you bought;
And he ended the market.

Arm. But tell me; how was there a Costard broken in a shin?

Moth. I will tell you sensibly.

Cost. Thou hast no feeling of it, Moth; I will speak that *l'envoy*:
I, Costard, running out, that was safely within,
Fell over the threshold, and broke my shin.

Arm. We will talk no more of this matter.

Cost. Till there be more matter in the shin.

Arm. Sirrah Costard, I will enfranchise thee.

Cost. O, marry me to one Frances:—I smell some *l'envoy*, some goose, in this.

Arm. By my sweet soul, I mean, setting thee at liberty, enfreedoming thy person; thou wert immured, restrained, captivated, bound.

Cost. True, true; and now you will be my purgation, and let me loose.

Arm. I give thee thy liberty, set thee from durance; and, in lieu thereof, impose on thee nothing but this: Bear this significant to the country maid Jaquenetta: there is remuneration; [*Giving him money.*] for the best ward of mine honour, is, rewarding my dependents. Moth, follow. [*Exit.*

Moth. Like the sequel, I.—Signior Costard, adieu.

Cost. My sweet ounce of man's flesh! my incony[4] Jew!— [*Exit* MOTH.

Now will I look to his remuneration. Remuneration! O, that's the Latin word for three fathings: three farthings—remuneration.—*What's the price of this inkle? a penny:—No, I'll give you a remuneration:* why, it carries it.—Remuneration!—why, it is a fairer name than French crown. I will never buy and sell out of this word.

Enter BIRON.

Biron. O, my good knave Costard! exceedingly well met.

Cost. Pray you, sir, how much carnation ribbon may a man buy for a remuneration?

Biron. What is a remuneration?

[4] Delightful.

Cost. Marry, sir, half-penny farthing.

Biron. O, why then, three-farthings-worth of silk.

Cost. I thank your worship: God be with you!

Biron. O, stay, slave; I must employ thee:
As thou wilt win my favour, good my knave,
Do one thing for me that I shall entreat.

Cost. When would you have it done, sir?

Biron. O, this afternoon.

Cost. Well, I will do it, sir: Fare you well.

Biron. O, thou knowest not what it is.

Cost. I shall know, sir, when I have done it.

Biron. Why, villain, thou must know first.

Cost. I will come to your worship to-morrow morning.

Biron. It must be done this afternoon. Hark, slave, it is but this;—
The princess comes to hunt here in the park,
And in her train there is a gentle lady;
When tongues speak sweetly, then they name her name,
And Rosaline they call her: ask for her;
And to her white hand see thou do commend
This seal'd-up counsel. There's thy guerdon;[5] go,
[*Gives him money.*

Cost. Guerdon,—O sweet guerdon! better than remuneration; eleven-pence-farthing better: Most sweet guerdon!—I will do it, sir, in print.[6]—Guerdon —remuneration. [*Exit.*

Biron. O!—And I, forsooth, in love! I, that have been love's whip;
A very beadle to a humorous sigh;

[5] Reward. [6] With the utmost exactness.

A critick; nay, a night-watch constable;
A domineering pedant o'er the boy,
Than whom no mortal so magnificent!
This wimpled,[7] whining, purblind, wayward boy;
This senior-junior, giant-dwarf, Dan Cupid;
Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms,
The anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
Liege of all loiterers and malcontents,
Dread prince of plackets,[8] king of codpieces,
Sole imperator, and great general
Of trotting paritors,[9]—O my little heart!—
And I to be a corporal of his field,
And wear his colours like a tumbler's hoop!
What? I! I love! I sue! I seek a wife!
A woman, that is like a German clock,
Still a repairing; ever out of frame;
And never going aright, being a watch,
But being watch'd that it may still go right?
Nay, to be perjur'd, which is worst of all;
And, among three, to love the worst of all;
A whitely wanton with a velvet brow,
With two pitch balls stuck in her face for eyes;
Ay, and, by heaven, one that will do the deed,
Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard:
And I to sigh for her! to watch for her!
To pray for her! Go to; it is a plague
That Cupid will impose for my neglect
Of his almighty dreadful little might.
Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue, and groan;
Some men must love my lady, and some Joan. [*Exit.*

[7] Hooded, veiled. [8] Petticoats.
[9] The officers of the spiritual courts who serve citations.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. Another part of the same.

Enter the Princess, ROSALINE, MARIA, KATHARINE, BOYET, *Lords, Attendants, and a Forester.*

Prin. Was that the king, that spurr'd his horse so hard
Against the steep uprising of the hill?
Boyet. I know not; but, I think, it was not he.
Prin. Whoe'er he was, he show'd a mounting mind.
Well, lords, to-day we shall have our despatch;
On Saturday we will return to France.—
Then, forester, my friend, where is the bush,
That we must stand and play the murderer in?
For. Here by, upon the edge of yonder coppice;
A stand, where you may make the fairest shoot.
Prin. I thank my beauty, I am fair that shoot,
And thereupon thou speak'st, the fairest shoot.
For. Pardon me, madam, for I meant not so.
Prin. What, what? first praise me, and again say, no?
O short-liv'd pride! Not fair? alack for woe!
For. Yes, madam, fair.
Prin. Nay, never paint me now;
Where fair is not, praise cannot mend the brow.
Here, good my glass, take this for telling true;
[*Giving him money.*
Fair payment for foul words is more than due.
For. Nothing but fair is that which you inherit.
Prin. See, see, my beauty will be sav'd by merit.

O heresy in fair, fit for these days!
A giving hand, though foul, shall have fair praise.—
But come, the bow:—Now mercy goes to kill,
And shooting well is then accounted ill.
Thus will I save my credit in the shoot:
Not wounding, pity would not let me do't;
If wounding, then it was to shew my skill,
That more for praise, than purpose, meant to kill.
And, out of question, so it is sometimes;
Glory grows guilty of detested crimes;
When, for fame's sake, for praise, an outward part,
We bend to that the working of the heart:
As I, for praise alone, now seek to spill
The poor deer's blood, that my heart means no ill.

Boyet. Do not curst wives hold that self-sovereignty
Only for praise' sake, when they strive to be
Lords o'er their lords?

Prin. Only for praise: and praise we may afford
To any lady that subdues a lord.

Enter COSTARD.

Prin. Here comes a member of the commonwealth.

Cost. God dig-you-den[1] all! Pray you, which is the head lady?

Prin. Thou shalt know her, fellow, by the rest that have no heads.

Cost. Which is the greatest lady, the highest?

Prin. The thickest, and the tallest.

Cost. The thickest, and the tallest! it is so; truth is truth.

[1] God give you good even.

An your waist, mistress, were as slender as my wit,
One of these maids' girdles for your waist should be fit.
Are not you the chief woman? you are the thickest here.

Prin. What's your will, sir? what's your will?

Cost. I have a letter from monsieur Biron, to one lady Rosaline.

Prin. O, thy letter, thy letter; he's a good friend of mine:
Stand aside, good bearer.—Boyet, you can carve;
Break up this capon.[2]

Boyet. I am bound to serve.—
This letter is mistook, it importeth none here;
It is writ to Jaquenetta.

Prin. We will read it, I swear:
Break the neck of the wax, and every one give ear.

Boyet. [Reads.] *By heaven, that thou art fair, is most infallible; true, that thou art beauteous; truth itself, that thou art lovely: More fairer than fair, beautiful than beauteous; truer than truth itself, have commiseration on thy heroical vassal! The magnanimous and most illustrate*[3] *king* Cophetua *set eye upon the pernicious and indubitate beggar* Zenelophon; *and he it was that might rightly say,* veni, vidi, vici; *which to anatomize in the vulgar, (O base and obscure vulgar!)* videlicet, *he came, saw, and overcame: he came, one; saw, two; overcame, three. Who came? the king? Why did he come? to see; Why did he see? to overcome: To whom came he? to the beggar; What saw he? the beggar; Who overcame he? the beggar:*

[2] Open this letter. [3] Illustrious.

The conclusion is victory; On whose side? the king's: the captive is enrich'd; On whose side? the beggar's; The catastrophe is a nuptial; On whose side? the king's?—no, on both in one, or one in both. I am the king; for so stands the comparison: thou the beggar; for so witnesseth thy lowliness. Shall I command thy love? I may: Shall I enforce thy love? I could: Shall I entreat thy love? I will. What shalt thou exchange for rags? robes; For tittles, titles; For thyself, me. Thus, expecting thy reply, I profane my lips on thy foot, my eyes on thy picture, and my heart on thy every part.

Thine, in the dearest design of industry,

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO.

Thus dost thou hear the Nemean lion roar
'Gainst thee, thou lamb, that standest as his prey;
Submissive fall his princely feet before,
And he from forage will incline to play:
But if thou strive, poor soul, what art thou then?
Food for his rage, repasture for his den.

Prin. What plume of feathers is he, that indited this letter?
What vane? what weather-cock? did you ever hear better?

Boyet. I am much deceived, but I remember the style.

Prin. Else your memory is bad, going o'er it erewhile.[4]

Boyet. This Armado is a Spaniard, that keeps here in court;
A phantasm, a Monarcho, and one that makes sport

[4] Just now.

To the prince, and his book-mates.

Prin. Thou, fellow, a word:
Who gave thee this letter?

Cost. I told you; my lord.

Prin. To whom shouldst thou give it?

Cost. From my lord to my lady.

Prin. From which lord, to which lady?

Cost. From my lord Biron, a good master of mine,
To a lady of France, that he call'd Rosaline.

Prin. Thou hast mistaken his letter. Come, lords, away.
Here, sweet, put up this; 'twill be thine another day.
[*Exit* Princess *and Train.*

Boyet. Who is the suitor? who is the suitor?

Ros. Shall I teach you to know?

Boyet. Ay, my continent of beauty.

Ros. Why, she that bears the bow.
Finely put off!

Boyet. My lady goes to kill horns; but, if thou marry,
Hang me by the neck, if horns that year miscarry.
Finely put on!

Ros. Well then, I am the shooter.

Boyet. And who is your deer?

Ros. If we choose by the horns, yourself: come near.
Finely put on, indeed!—

Mar. You still wrangle with her, Boyet, and she strikes at the brow.

Boyet. But she herself is hit lower: Have I hit her now?

Ros. Shall I come upon thee with an old saying,

that was a man when king Pepin of France was a little boy, as touching the hit it?

Boyet. So I may answer thee with one as old, that was a woman when queen Guinever of Britain was a little wench, as touching the hit it.

Ros. *Thou canst not hit it, hit it, hit it,* [Singing.
Thou canst not hit it, my good man.

Boyet. *An I cannot, cannot, cannot,*
An I cannot, another can.

[*Exeunt* Ros. *and* KATH.

Cost. By my troth, most pleasant! how both did fit it!

Mar. A mark marvellous well shot; for they both did hit it.

Boyet. A mark! O, mark but that mark; A mark, says my lady!
Let the mark have a prick in't, to mete at, if it may be.

Mar. Wide o' the bow hand! I'faith your hand is out.

Cost. Indeed, a' must shoot nearer, or he'll ne'er hit the clout.

Boyet. An if my hand be out, then, belike your hand is in.

Cost. Then will she get the upshot by cleaving the pin.

Mar. Come, come, you talk greasily, your lips grow foul.

Cost. She's too hard for you at pricks, sir; challenge her to bowl.

Boyet. I fear too much rubbing; Good night, my good owl. [*Exeunt* BOYET *and* MARIA.

Cost. By my soul, a swain! a most simple clown!
Lord, lord! how the ladies and I have put him down!
O' my troth, most sweet jests! most incony vulgar wit!
When it comes so smoothly off, so obscenely, as it were, so fit.
Armatho o' the one side,—O, a most dainty man!
To see him walk before a lady, and to bear her fan!
To see him kiss his hand! and how most sweetly a' will swear!—
And his page o' t' other side, that handful of wit!
Ah, heavens, it is a most pathetical nit!
Sola, sola! [*Shouting within.*

[*Exit* COSTARD, *running.*

SCENE II.

The same.

Enter HOLOFERNES, *Sir* NATHANIEL, *and* DULL.

Nath. Very reverent sport, truly; and done in the testimony of a good conscience.

Hol. The deer was, as you know, in *sanguis*,—blood; ripe as a pomewater,[5] who now hangeth like a jewel in the ear of *cœlo*,—the sky, the welkin, the heaven; and anon falleth like a crab, on the face of *terra*,—the soil, the land, the earth.

Nath. Truly, master Holofernes, the epithets are sweetly varied, like a scholar at the least: But, sir, I assure ye, it was a buck of the first head.

[5] A species of apple.

Hol. Sir Nathaniel, *haud credo.*

Dull. 'Twas not a *haud credo*, 'twas a pricket.

Hol. Most barbarous intimation! yet a kind of insinuation, as it were, *in via*, in way, of explication; *facere*, as it were, replication, or, rather, *ostentare*, to show, as it were, his inclination,—after his undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or rather unlettered, or, ratherest, unconfirmed fashion,—to insert again my *haud credo* for a deer.

Dull. I said, the deer was not a *haud credo;* 'twas a pricket.

Hol. Twice sod simplicity, *bis coctus!*—O thou monster ignorance, how deformed dost thou look!

Nath. Sir, he hath never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book; he hath not eat paper, as it were; he hath not drunk ink: his intellect is not replenished; he is only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts;
And such barren plants are set before us, that we thankful should be
(Which we of taste and feeling are) for those parts that do fructify in us more than he.
For as it would ill become me to be vain, indiscreet, or a fool,
So, were there a patch[6] set on learning, to see him in a school:
But, *omne bene*, say I; being of an old father's mind,
Many can brook the weather, that love not the wind.

Dull. You two are book-men: Can you tell by your wit,
What was a month old at Cain's birth, that's not five weeks old as yet?

[6] A low fellow.

Hol. Dictynna, good man Dull; Dictynna, good man Dull.

Dull. What is Dictynna?

Nath. A title to Phœbe, to Luna, to the moon.

Hol. The moon was a month old, when Adam was no more;

And raught[7] not to five weeks, when he came to fivescore.

The allusion holds in the exchange,

Dull. 'Tis true indeed; the collusion holds in the exchange.

Hol. God comfort thy capacity! I say, the allusion holds in the exchange.

Dull. And I say the pollution holds in the exchange; for the moon is never but a month old: and I say beside, that 'twas a pricket that the princess kill'd.

Hol. Sir Nathaniel, will you hear an extemporal epitaph on the death of the deer? and, to humour the ignorant, I have call'd the deer the princess kill'd, a pricket.

Nath. *Perge*, good master Holofernes, *perge*; so it shall please you to abrogate scurrility.

Hol. I will something affect the letter; for it argues facility.

The praiseful princess pierc'd and prick'd a pretty pleasing pricket;

Some say, a sore; but not a sore, till now made sore with shooting.

The dogs did yell; put l to sore, then sorel jumps from thicket;

Or pricket, sore, or else sorel; the people fall a hooting.

[7] Reached.

If sore be sore, then L to sore makes fifty sores; O sore L!
Of one sore I an hundred make, by adding but one more L.

Nath. A rare talent!

Dull. If a talent be a claw, look how he claws him with a talent.

Hol. This is a gift that I have, simple, simple; a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas, apprehensions, motions, revolutions: these are begot in the ventricle of memory, nourished in the womb of *pia mater;* and deliver'd upon the mellowing of occasion: But the gift is good in those in whom it is acute, and I am thankful for it.

Nath. Sir, I praise the Lord for you; and so may my parishioners; for their sons are well tutor'd by you, and their daughters profit very greatly under you: you are a good member of the commonwealth.

Hol. *Mehercle,* if their sons be ingenious, they shall want no instruction: if their daughters be capable, I will put it to them: But, *vir sapit, qui pauca loquitur:* a soul feminine saluteth us.

Enter JAQUENETTA *and* COSTARD.

Jaq. God give you good morrow, master person.

Hol. Master person,—*quasi* pers-on. And if one should be pierced, which is the one?

Cost. Marry, master schoolmaster, he that is likest to a hogshead.

Hol. Of piercing a hogshead! a good lustre of

conceit in a turf of earth; fire enough for a flint, pearl enough for a swine: 'tis pretty; it is well.

Jaq. Good master parson, be so good as read me this letter; it was given me by Costard, and sent me from Don Armatho: I beseech you, read it.

Hol. *Fauste, precor gelidâ quando pecus omne sub umbrâ*
Ruminat,—and so forth. Ah, good old Mantuan! I may speak of thee as the traveller doth of Venice:
——*Vinegia, Vinegia,*
Chi non te vede, ei non te pregia.

Old Mantuan! old Mantuan! Who understandeth thee not, loves thee not.—*Ut, re, sol, la, mi, fa.*—Under pardon, sir, what are the contents? or, rather, as Horace says in his—What, my soul, verses?

Nath. Ay, sir, and very learned.

Hol. Let me hear a staff, a stanza, a verse; *Lege, domine.*

Nath. If love make me forsworn, how shall I swear to love?
Ah, never faith could hold, if not to beauty vowed!
Though to myself forsworn, to thee I'll faithful prove;
Those thoughts to me were oaks, to thee like osiers bowed.
Study his bias leaves, and makes his book thine eyes;
Where all those pleasures live, that art would comprehend:
If knowledge be the mark, to know thee shall suffice;
Well learned is that tongue, that well can thee commend:

All ignorant that soul, that sees thee without wonder;
(Which is to me some praise, that I thy parts admire;)
Thy eye Jove's lightning bears, thy voice his dreadful thunder,
Which, not to anger bent, is musick, and sweet fire.
Celestial, as thou art, oh pardon, love, this wrong,
That sings heaven's praise with such an earthly tongue!

Hol. You find not the apostrophes, and so miss the accent: let me supervise the canzonet. Here are only numbers ratified; but, for the elegancy, facility, and golden cadence of poesy, *caret*. Ovidius Naso was the man: and why, indeed, Naso; but for smelling out the odoriferous flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention? *Imitari*, is nothing: so doth the hound his master, the ape his keeper, the tired horse[8] his rider. But damosella virgin, was this directed to you?

Jaq. Ay, sir, from one Monsieur Biron, one of the strange queen's lords.

Hol. I will overglance the superscript. *To the snow-white hand of the most beauteous Lady Rosaline.* I will look again on the intellect of the letter, for the nomination of the party writing to the person written unto:

Your Ladyship's in all desired employment, BIRON. Sir Nathaniel, this Biron is one of the votaries with the king; and here he hath framed a letter to a

[8] Horse adorned with ribbands.

sequent of the stranger queen's, which, accidently, or by the way of progression, hath miscarried.—Trip and go, my sweet; deliver this paper into the royal hand of the king; it may concern much: Stay not thy compliment; I forgive thy duty; adieu.

Jaq. Good Costard go with me.—Sir, God save your life!

Cost. Have with thee, my girl.

[*Exeunt* COST. *and* JAQ.

Nath. Sir, you have done this in the fear of God, very religiously; and, as a certain father saith——

Hol. Sir, tell not me of the father, I do fear colourable colours. But, to return to the verses; Did they please you, sir Nathaniel?

Nath. Marvellous well for the pen.

Hol. I do dine to-day at the father's of a certain pupil of mine; where if, before repast, it shall please you to gratify the table with a grace, I will, on my privilege I have with the parents of the foresaid child or pupil, undertake your *ben venuto;* where I will prove those verses to be very unlearned, neither savouring of poetry, wit, nor invention: I beseech your society.

Nath. And thank you too: for society, (saith the text,) is the happiness of life.

Hol. And, certes,[9] the text most infallibly concludes it.—Sir, [*To* DULL.] I do invite you too; you shall not say me, nay: *pauca verba.* Away; the gentles are at their game, and we will to our recreation. [*Exeunt.*

[9] In truth.

SCENE III.

Another part of the same.

Enter BIRON, *with a paper.*

Biron. The king he is hunting the deer; I am coursing myself: they have pitch'd a toil; I am toiling in a pitch; pitch that defiles; defile! a foul word. Well, Set thee down, sorrow! for so, they say, the fool said, and so say I, and I the fool. Well proved, wit! By the lord, this love is as mad as Ajax: it kills sheep; it kills me, I a sheep: Well proved again on my side! I will not love: if I do, hang me; i'faith, I will not. O, but her eye,—by this light, but for her eye, I would not love her; yes, for her two eyes. Well, I do nothing in the world but lie, and lie in my throat. By heaven, I do love: and it hath taught me to rhyme, and to be melancholy; and here is part of my rhyme, and here my melancholy. Well, she hath one o' my sonnets already; the clown bore it, the fool sent it, and the lady hath it: sweet clown, sweeter fool, sweetest lady! By the world, I would not care a pin if the other three were in: Here comes one with a paper; God give him grace to groan! [*Gets up into a tree.*

Enter the King, *with a paper.*

King. Ah me!

Biron. [*Aside.*] Shot, by heaven!—Proceed, sweet

Cupid; thou hast thump'd him with thy bird-bolt under the left pap:—I'faith secrets.—

King. [Reads.] *So sweet a kiss the golden sun gives not*
To those fresh morning drops upon the rose,
As thy eye-beams, when their fresh rays have smote
The night of dew that on my cheeks down flows:
Nor shines the silver moon one half so bright
Through the transparent bosom of the deep,
As doth thy face through tears of mine give light;
Thou shin'st in every tear that I do weep:
No drop but as a coach doth carry thee,
So ridest thou triumphing in my woe;
Do but behold the tears that swell in me,
And they thy glory through thy grief will show:
But do not love thyself; then thou wilt keep
My tears for glasses, and still make me weep.
O queen of queens, how far dost thou excel!
No thought can think, nor tongue of mortal tell.—

How shall she know my griefs? I'll drop the paper;
Sweet leaves, shade folly. Who is he comes here?
[*Steps aside.*

Enter LONGAVILLE, *with a paper.*

What, Longaville! and reading! listen, ear,

Biron. Now, in thy likeness, one more fool, appear! [*Aside.*

Long. Ah me! I am forsworn.

Biron. Why, he comes in like a perjure, wearing papers. [*Aside.*

King. In love, I hope; Sweet fellowship in shame!
[*Aside.*

Biron. One drunkard loves another of the name.
[*Aside.*

Long. Am I the first that have been perjur'd so?

Biron. [*Aside.*] I could put thee in comfort; not by two, that I know:
Thou mak'st the triumviry, the corner-cap of society,
The shape of love's Tyburn that hangs up simplicity.

Long. I fear, these stubborn lines lack power to move:
O sweet Maria, empress of my love!
These numbers will I tear, and write in prose.

Biron. [*Aside.*] O, rhymes are guards on wanton Cupid's hose:
Disfigure not his slop.

Long. This same shall go.—
[*He reads the sonnet.*

Did not the heavenly rhetorick of thine eye
('Gainst whom the world cannot hold argument,)
Persuade my heart to this false perjury?
Vows, for thee broke, deserve not punishment.
A woman I forswore; but, I will prove,
Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love;
Thy grace being gain'd, cures all disgrace in me.
Vows are but breath, and breath a vapour is:
Then thou, fair sun, which on my earth dost shine,
Exhal'st this vapour vow; in thee it is:
If broken then, it is no fault of mine;
If by me broke, What fool is not so wise,
To lose an oath to win a paradise?

Biron. [*Aside.*] This is the liver vein, which makes
flesh a deity;
A green goose, a goddess: pure, pure idolatry.
God amend us, God amend! we are much out o' the
way.

Enter DUMAIN, *with a paper.*

Long. By whom shall I send this?—Company! stay. [*Stepping aside.*

Biron. [*Aside.*] All hid, all hid, an old infant play:
Like a demi-god here sit I in the sky,
And wretched fools' secrets heedfully o'er-eye.
More sacks to the mill! O heavens, I have my wish;
Dumain transform'd: four woodcocks in a dish!

Dum. O most divine Kate!

Biron. O most prophane coxcomb! [*Aside.*

Dum. By heaven, the wonder of a mortal eye!

Biron. By earth she is but corporal; there you lie. [*Aside.*

Dum. Her amber hairs for foul have amber coted.[1]

Biron. An amber-colour'd raven was well noted. [*Aside.*

Dum. As upright as the cedar.

Biron. Stoop, I say;
Her shoulder is with child. [*Aside.*

Dum. As fair as day.

[1] Outstripped, surpassed.

Biron. Ay, as some days; but then no sun must shine. [*Aside.*

Dum. O that I had my wish!

Long. And I had mine! [*Aside.*

King. And I mine too, good Lord! [*Aside.*

Biron. Amen, so I had mine: Is not that a good word? [*Aside.*

Dum. I would forget her; but a fever she
Reigns in my blood, and will remember'd be.

Biron. A fever in your blood, why, then incision
Would let her out in saucers; Sweet misprision! [*Aside.*

Dum. Once more I'll read the ode that I have writ.

Biron. Once more I'll mark how love can vary wit. [*Aside.*

Dum. *On a day, (alack the day!)*
Love, whose month is ever May,
Spied a blossom, passing fair,
Playing in the wanton air:
Through the velvet leaves the wind,
All unseen, 'gan passage find;
That the lover, sick to death,
Wish'd himself the heaven's breath.
Air, quoth he, *thy cheeks may blow;*
Air, would I might triumph so!
But alack, my hand is sworn,
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn:
Vow, alack, for youth unmeet;
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet.

Do not call it sin in me,
That I am forsworn for thee:
Thou for whom even Jove would swear,
Juno but an Ethiop were;
And deny himself for Jove,
Turning mortal for thy love.—

This will I send; and something else more plain,
That shall express my true love's fasting pain.
O, would the King, Biron, and Longaville,
Were lovers too! Ill, to example ill,
Would from my forehead wipe a perjur'd note;
For none offend, where all alike do dote.

Long. Dumain, [*advancing.*] thy love is far from charity,
That in love's grief desir'st society:
You may look pale, but I should blush, I know,
To be o'erheard, and taken napping so.

King. Come, sir, [*advancing.*] you blush; as his your case is such;
You chide at him, offending twice as much:
You do not love Maria; Longaville
Did never sonnet for her sake compile;
Nor never lay his wreathed arms athwart
His loving bosom, to keep down his heart.
I have been closely shrouded in this bush,
And mark'd you both, and for you both did blush.
I heard your guilty rhymes, observ'd your fashion;
Saw sighs reek from you, noted well your passion:
Ah me! says one; O Jove! the other cries;
One, her hairs were gold, crystal the other's eyes:

You would for paradise break faith and troth;
[*To* LONG.
And Jove, for your love, would infringe an oath.
[*To* DUMAIN.
What will Birón say, when that he shall hear
A faith infring'd, which such a zeal did swear?
How will he scorn? how will he spend his wit?
How will he triumph, leap, and laugh at it?
For all the wealth that ever I did see,
I would not have him know so much by me.

Biron. Now step I forth to whip hypocrisy.—
Ah, good my liege, I pray thee pardon me:
[*Descends from the tree.*
Good heart, what grace hast thou, thus to reprove
These worms for loving, that art most in love?
Your eyes do make no coaches; in your tears,
There is no certain princess that appears:
You'll not be perjur'd, 'tis a hateful thing;
Tush, none but minstrels like of sonneting.
But are you not asham'd? nay, are you not,
All three of you, to be thus much o'ershot?
You found his mote; the king your mote did see;
But I a beam do find in each of three.
O, what a scene of foolery I have seen,
Of sighs, of groans, of sorrow, and of teen![2]
O me, with what strict patience have I sat,
To see a king transformed to a gnat!
To see great Hercules whipping a gigg,
And profound Solomon to tune a jigg,

[2] Grief.

And Nestor play at push-pin with the boys,
And critick[3] Timon laugh at idle toys!
Where lies thy grief, O tell me, good Dumain?
And, gentle Longaville, where lies thy pain?
And where my liege's? all about the breast:—
A caudle, ho!

King. Too bitter is thy jest.
Are we betray'd thus to thy over-view?

Biron. Not you by me, but I betray'd to you;
I, that am honest; I, that hold it sin
To break the vow I am engaged in;
I am betray'd, by keeping company
With moon-like men, of strange inconstancy.
When shall you see me write a thing in rhyme?
Or groan for Joan? or spend a minute's time
In pruning[4] me? When shall you hear that I
Will praise a hand, a foot, a face, an eye,
A gait, a state, a brow, a breast, a waist,
A leg, a limb?—

King. Soft; Whither away so fast?
A true man, or a thief, that gallops so?

Biron. I post from love; good lover, let me go.

Enter JAQUENETTA *and* COSTARD.

Jaq. God bless the king!

King. What present hast thou there?

Cost. Some certain treason.

King. What makes treason here?

Cost. Nay, it makes nothing, sir.

King. If it mar nothing neither,
The treason, and you, go in peace away together.

[3] Cynic. [4] In trimming myself.

Jaq. I beseech your grace, let this letter be read;
Our parson misdoubts it; 'twas treason, he said.

King. Biron, read it over.

[*Giving him the letter.*

Where hadst thou it?

Jaq. Of Costard.

King. Where hadst thou it?

Cost. Of Dun Adramadio, Dun Adramadio.

King. How now! what is in you? why dost thou tear it?

Biron. A toy, my liege, a toy; your grace needs not fear it.

Long. It did move him to passion, and therefore let's hear it.

Dum. It is Biron's writing, and here is his name.

[*Picks up the pieces.*

Biron. Ah, you whoreson loggerhead, [*To* COSTARD.] you were born to do me shame.—
Guilty, my lord, guilty; I confess, I confess.

King. What?

Biron. That you three fools lack'd me fool to make up the mess:
He, he, and you, my liege, and I,
Are pick-purses in love, and we deserve to die.
O, dismiss this audience, and I shall tell you more.

Dum. Now the number is even.

Biron. True, true; we are four:—
Will these turtles be gone?

King. Hence, sirs; away.

Cost. Walk aside the true folk, and let the traitors stay.

[*Exeunt* COST. *and* JAQ.

Biron. Sweet lords, sweet lovers, O let us embrace!
As true we are, as flesh and blood can be:
The sea will ebb and flow, heaven show his face;
Young blood will not obey an old decree:
We cannot cross the cause why we were born;
Therefore, of all hands must we be forsworn.

King. What, did these rent lines show some love of thine?

Biron. Did they, quoth you? Who sees the heavenly Rosaline,
That, like a rude and savage man of Inde,
At the first opening of the gorgeous east,
Bows not his vassal head; and, strucken blind,
Kisses the base ground with obedient breast?
What peremptory eagle-sighted eye
Dares look upon the heaven of her brow,
That is not blinded by her majesty?

King. What zeal, what fury hath inspir'd thee now?
My love, her mistress, is a gracious moon;
She, an attending star, scarce seen a light.

Biron. My eyes are then no eyes, nor I Birón:
O, but for my love, day would turn to night!
Of all complexions the cull'd sovereignty
Do meet, as at a fair, in her fair cheek;
Where several worthies make one dignity;
Where nothing wants, that want itself doth seek.

Lend me the flourish of all gentle tongues,—
Fye, painted rhetorick! O, she needs it not:
To things of sale a seller's praise belongs;
She passes praise; then praise too short doth blot.
A wither'd hermit, five-score winters worn,
Might shake off fifty, looking in her eye:
Beauty doth varnish age, as if new-born,
And gives the crutch the cradle's infancy.
O, 'tis the sun, that maketh all things shine!
King. By heaven, thy love is black as ebony.
Biron. Is ebony like her? O wood divine!
A wife of such wood were felicity.
O, who can give an oath? where is a book?
That I may swear, beauty doth beauty lack,
If that she learn not of her eye to look:
No face is fair, that is not full so black.
King. O paradox! Black is the badge of hell,
The hue of dungeons, and the scowl of night;
And beauty's crest becomes the heavens well.
Biron. Devils soonest tempt, resembling spirits of light.
O, if in black my lady's brows be deckt,
It mourns, that painting, and usurping hair,
Should ravish doters with a false aspect;
And therefore is she born to make black fair.
Her favour turns the fashion of the days;
For native blood is counted painting now;
And therefore red, that would avoid dispraise,
Paints itself black, to imitate her brow.

Dum. To look like her, are chimney-sweepers black.

Long. And, since her time, are colliers counted bright.

King. And Ethiops of their sweet complexion crack.

Dum. Dark needs no candles now, for dark is light.

Biron. Your mistresses dare never come in rain,
For fear their colours should be wash'd away.

King. 'Twere good, yours did; for, sir, to tell you plain,
I'll find a fairer face not wash'd to-day.

Biron. I'll prove her fair, or talk till dooms-day here,

King. No devil will fright thee then so much as she.

Dum. I never knew man hold vile stuff so dear.

Long. Look, here's thy love: my foot and her face see. [*Showing his shoe.*

Biron. O, if the streets were paved with thine eyes,
Her feet were much too dainty for such tread!

Dum. O vile! then as she goes, what upward lies
The street should see as she walk'd over head.

King. But what of this? Are we not all in love?

Biron. O, nothing so sure; and thereby all forsworn.

King. Then leave this chat; and, good Birón, now prove
Our loving lawful, and our faith not torn.

Dum. Ay, marry, there,—some flattery for this evil.

Long. O, some authority how to proceed;
Some tricks, some quillets,[5] how to cheat the devil.

Dum. Some salve for perjury.

Biron. O, tis more than need?—
Have at you then, affection's men at arms:
Consider, what you first did swear unto;—
To fast,—to study,—and to see no woman;—
Flat treason 'gainst the kingly state of youth.
Say, can you fast? your stomachs are too young;
And abstinence engenders maladies.
And where that you have vow'd to study, lords,
In that each of you hath forsworn his book:
Can you still dream, and pore, and thereon look?
For when would you, my lord, or you, or you,
Have found the ground of study's excellence,
Without the beauty of a woman's face?
From women's eyes this doctrine I derive?
They are the ground, the books, the academes,
From whence doth spring the true Promethean fire.
Why, universal plodding prisons up
The nimble spirits in the arteries;
As motion, and long during action, tires
The sinewy vigour of the traveller.
Now, for not looking on a woman's face,
You have in that forsworn the use of eyes;
And study too, the causer of your vow:
For where is any author in the world,
Teaches such beauty as a woman's eye?

[5] Law-chicane.

Learning is but an adjunct to ourself,
And where we are, our learning likewise is.
Then, when ourselves we see in ladies' eyes,
Do we not likewise see our learning there?
O, we have made a vow to study, lords;
And in that vow we have forsworn our books;
For when would you, my liege, or you, or you,
In leaden contemplation, have found out
Such fiery numbers, as the prompting eyes
Of beauteous tutors have enrich'd you with?
Other slow arts entirely keep the brain;
And therefore finding barren practisers,
Scarce show a harvest of their heavy toil:
But love, first learned in a lady's eyes,
Lives not alone immured in the brain;
But with the motion of all elements,
Courses as swift as thought in every power;
And gives to every power a double power,
Above their functions and their offices.
It adds a precious seeing to the eye;
A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind;
A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,
When the suspicious head of theft is stopp'd;
Love's feeling is more soft, and sensible,
Than are the tender horns of cockled snails;
Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in taste:
For valour, is not love a Hercules,
Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?
Subtle as sphinx; as sweet, and musical,
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair;
And, when love speaks, the voice of all the gods
Makes heaven drowsy with the harmony.

Never durst poet touch a pen to write,
Untill his ink were temper'd with love's sighs;
O, then his lines would ravish savage ears,
And plant in tyrants mild humility.
From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the arts, the academes,
That show, contain, and nourish all the world;
Else, none at all in aught proves excellent:
Then fools you were these women to forswear;
Or, keeping what is sworn, you will prove fools.
For wisdom's sake, a word that all men love;
Or for love's sake, a word that loves all men;
Or for men's sake, the authors of these women;
Or women's sake, by whom we men are men;
Let us once lose our oaths, to find ourselves,
Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths:
It is religion to be thus forsworn:
For charity itself fulfils the law;
And who can sever love from charity?

King. Saint Cupid, then! and, soldiers, to the field!

Biron. Advance your standards, and upon them, lords;
Pell-mell, down with them! but be first advis'd,
In conflict that you get the sun of them.

Long. Now to plain-dealing; lay these glozes by:
Shall we resolve to woo these girls of France?

King. And win them too: therefore let us devise
Some entertainment for them in their tents.

Biron. First, from the park let us conduct them thither;

Then, homeward, every man attach the hand
Of his fair mistress: in the afternoon
We will with some strange pastime solace them,
Such as the shortness of the time can shape;
For revels, dances, masks, and merry hours,
Fore-run fair Love, strewing her way with flowers.

King. Away, away! no time shall be omitted,
That will be time, and may by us be fitted.

Biron. *Allons! Allons!*—Sow'd cockle reap'd no corn;
And justice always whirls in equal measure:
Light wenches may prove plagues to men forsworn;
If so, our copper buys no better treasure.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. Another part of the same.

Enter HOLOFERNES, *Sir* NATHANIEL, *and* DULL.

Hol. *Satis quod sufficit.*

Nath. I praise God for you, sir: your reasons[6] at dinner have been sharp and sententious; pleasant without scurrility, witty without affection,[7] audacious without impudency, learned without opinion, and strange without heresy. I did converse this *quondam* day with a companion of the king's, who is intituled, nominated, or called, Don Adriano de Armado.

Hol. *Novi hominem tanquam te:* His humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed,

[6] Discourses. [7] Affectation.

his eye ambitious, his gait majestical, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous, and thrasonical.[8] He is too picked,[9] too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too perigrinate, as I may call it.

Nath. A most singular and choice epithet.

[*Takes out his table-book.*

Hol. He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument. I abhor such fanatical phantasms, such insociable and point-devise[1] companions; such rackers of orthography, as to speak, dout, fine, when he should say, doubt; det, when he should pronounce, debt; d, e, b, t; not, d, e, t: he clepeth a calf, cauf; half, hauf; neighbour, *vocatur,* nebour, neigh, abbreviated, ne: This is abhominable, (which he would call abominable,) it insinuateth me of insanie; *Ne intelligis domine?* to make frantick, lunatick.

Nath. *Laus deo, bone intelligo.*

Hol. *Bone?*——*bone,* for *benè: Priscian* a little scratch'd; 'twill serve.

Enter ARMADO, MOTH, *and* COSTARD.

Nath. *Videsne quis venit?*

Hol. *Video, & gaudeo.*

Arm. Chirra! [*To* MOTH.

Hol. *Quare* Chirra, not sirrah?

Arm. Men of peace, well encounter'd.

Hol. Most military sir, salutation.

Moth. They have been at a great feast of languages, and stolen the scraps. [*To* COSTARD *aside.*

[8] Boastful. [9] Over-dressed.

[1] Finical exactness.

Cost. O, they have lived long in the alms-basket of words! I marvel, thy master hath not eaten thee for a word; for thou art not so long by the head as *honorificabilitudinitatibus:* thou art easier swallowed than a flap-dragon.[2]

Moth. Peace; the peal begins.

Arm. Monsieur, [*To* HOL.] are you not letter'd?

Moth. Yes, yes; he teaches boys the horn-book:—What is a, b, spelt backward with a horn on his head?

Hol. Ba, *pueritia,* with a horn added.

Moth. Ba, most silly sheep, with a horn:—You hear his learning.

Hol. *Quis, quis,* thou consonant?

Moth. The third of the five vowels, if you repeat them; or the fifth, if I.

Hol. I will repeat them, a, e, i.—

Moth. The sheep: the other two concludes it; o, u.

Arm. Now, by the salt wave of the Mediterraneum, a sweet touch,[3] a quick venew of wit: snip, snap, quick and home; it rejoiceth my intellect: true wit.

Moth. Offer'd by a child to an old man; which is wit-old.

Hol. What is the figure? what is the figure?

Moth. Horns.

Hol. Thou disputest like an infant: go, whip thy gig.

Moth. Lend me your horn to make one, and I will whip about your infamy *circùm circà;* A gig of a cuckold's horn!

[2] A small inflammable substance, swallowed in a glass of wine. [3] A hit.

Cost. An I had but one penny in the world, thou shouldst have it to buy gingerbread: hold, there is the very remuneration I had of thy master, thou half-penny purse of wit, thou pigeon-egg of discretion. O, an the heavens were so pleased, that thou wert but my bastard! what a joyful father wouldst thou make me! Go to; thou hast it *ad dunghill*, at the fingers' ends, as they say.

Hol. O, I smell false Latin; dunghill for *unguem*.

Arm. Arts-man, *præambula;* we will be singled from the barbarous. Do you not educate youth at the charge-house[4] on the top of the mountain?

Hol. Or, *mons*, the hill.

Arm. At your sweet pleasure, for the mountain.

Hol. I do, sans question.

Arm. Sir, it is the king's most sweet pleasure and affection, to congratulate the princess at her pavilion, in the posteriors of this day; which the rude multitude call, the afternoon.

Hol. The posterior of the day, most generous sir, is liable, congruent, and measurable for the afternoon: the word is well cull'd, chose; sweet and apt, I do assure you, sir, I do assure.

Arm. Sir, the king is a noble gentleman; and my familiar, I do assure you, very good friend:—For what is inward[5] between us, let it pass:—I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy;—I beseech thee, apparel thy head;—and among other importunate and most serious designs,—and of great import indeed, too;—but let that pass:—for I must tell thee, it will please his grace (by the world) sometime to

[4] Free-school. [5] Confidential.

lean upon my poor shoulder; and with his royal finger, thus, dally with my excrement,[6] with my mustachio: but sweet heart, let that pass. By the world, I recount no fable; some certain special honours it pleaseth his greatness to impart to Armado, a soldier, a man of travel, that hath seen the world: but let that pass.—The very all of all is,—but, sweet heart, I do implore secrecy,—that the king would have me present the princess, sweet chuck,[7] with some delightful ostentation, or show, or pageant, or antick, or fire-work. Now, understanding that the curate and your sweet self, are good at such eruptions, and sudden breaking out of mirth, as it were, I have acquainted you withal, to the end to crave your assistance.

Hol. Sir, you shall present before her the nine worthies.—Sir Nathaniel, as concerning some entertainment of time, some show in the posterior of this day, to be rendered by our assistance,—the king's command, and this most gallant, illustrate, and learned gentleman,—before the princess; I say, none so fit as to present the nine worthies.

Nath. Where will you find men worthy enough to present them?

Hol. Joshua, yourself; myself, or this gallant gentleman, Judas Maccabæus; this swain, because of his great limb or joint, shall pass Pompey the great; the page, Hercules.

Arm. Pardon, sir, error: he is not quantity enough for that worthy's thumb: he is not so big as the end of his club.

[6] Beard. [7] Chick.

Hol. Shall I have audience? he shall present Hercules in minority: his *enter* and *exit* shall be strangling a snake; and I will have an apology for that purpose.

Moth. An excellent device! so, if any of the audience hiss, you may cry: *well done Hercules! now thou crushest the snake!* that is the way to make an offence gracious; though few have the grace to do it.

Arm. For the rest of the worthies?—

Hol. I will play three myself.

Moth. Thrice-worthy gentleman!

Arm. Shall I tell you a thing?

Hol. We attend.

Arm. We will have, if this fadge[8] not, an antick. I beseech you, follow.

Hol. *Via,*[9] goodman Dull! thou hast spoken no word all this while.

Dull. Nor understood none neither, sir.

Hol. *Allons!* we will employ thee.

Dull. I'll make one in a dance, or so; or I will play on the tabor to the worthies, and let them dance the hay.

Hol. Most dull, honest Dull, to our sport, away.

[*Exeunt.*

[8] Suit. [9] Courage.

SCENE II.

Another part of the same. Before the Princess's *Pavilion.*

Enter the Princess, KATHARINE, ROSALINE, *and* MARIA.

Prin. Sweet hearts, we shall be rich ere we depart,
If fairings come thus plentifully in:
A lady wall'd about with diamonds!—
Look you, what I have from the loving king.

Ros. Madam, came nothing else along with that?

Prin. Nothing but this? yes, as much love in rhyme,
As would be cramm'd up in a sheet of paper,
Writ on both sides the leaf, margent and all;
That he was fain to seal on Cupid's name.

Ros. That was the way to make his god-head wax;[1]
For he hath been five thousand years a boy.

Kath. Ay, and a shrewd unhappy gallows too.

Ros. You'll ne'er be friends with him; he kill'd your sister.

Kath. He made her melancholy, sad, and heavy;
And so she died: had she been light, like you,
Of such a merry, nimble, stirring spirit,
She might have been a grandam ere she died:
And so may you; for a light heart lives long.

Ros. What's your dark meaning, mouse,[2] of this light word?

[1] Grow. [2] Formerly a term of endearment.

Kath. A light condition in a beauty dark.

Ros. We need more light to find your meaning out.

Kath. You'll mar the light, by taking it in snuff;[3]
Therefore, I'll darkly end the argument.

Ros. Look, what you do, you do it still i' the dark.

Kath. So do not you; for you are a light wench.

Ros. Indeed, I weigh not you; and therefore light.

Kath. You weigh me not—O, that's you care not for me.

Ros. Great reason; for, Past cure is still past care.

Prin. Well bandied both; a set of wit well play'd.
But Rosaline, you have a favour too:
Who sent it? and what is it?

Ros. I would, you knew:
An if my face were but as fair as yours,
My favour were as great; be witness this.
Nay, I have verses too, I thank Birón:
The numbers true; and, were the numb'ring too,
I were the fairest goddess on the ground:
I am compar'd to twenty thousand fairs.
O, he hath drawn my picture in his letter!

Prin. Any thing like?

Ros. Much, in the letters; nothing in the praise.

Prin. Beauteous as ink; a good conclusion.

Kath. Fair as a text B in a copy-book.

Ros. 'Ware pencils! How? let me not die your debtor,
My red dominical, my golden letter:
O, that your face were not so full of O's!

Kath. A pox of that jest! and beshrew all shrows!

[3] In anger.

Prin. But what was sent to you from fair Dumain?
Kath. Madam, this glove.
Prin. Did he not send you twain?
Kath. Yes, madam; and moreover,
Some thousand verses of a faithful lover:
A huge translation of hypocrisy.
Vilely compil'd, profound simplicity.
Mar. This, and these pearls, to me sent Longaville;
The letter is too long by half a mile.
Prin. I think no less: Dost thou not wish in heart,
The chain were longer, and the letter short?
Mar. Ay, or I would these hands might never part.
Prin. We are wise girls, to mock our lovers so.
Ros. They are worse fools to purchase mocking so.
That same Birón I'll torture ere I go.
O, that I knew he were but in by the week!
How I would make him fawn, and beg, and seek;
And wait the season, and observe the times,
And spend his prodigal wits in bootless rhymes;
And shape his service wholly to my behests;
And make him proud to make me proud that jests!
So portent-like would I o'ersway his state,
That he should be my fool, and I his fate.
Prin. None are so surely caught, when they are catch'd,
As wit turn'd fool: folly, in wisdom hatch'd,
Hath wisdom's warrant, and the help of school;
And wit's own grace to grace a learned fool.
Ros. The blood of youth burns not with such excess,
As gravity's revolt to wantonness.

Mar. Folly in fools bears not so strong a note,
As foolery in the wise, when wit doth dote;
Since all the power thereof it doth apply,
To prove, by wit, worth in simplicity.

Enter BOYET.

Prin. Here comes Boyet, and mirth is in his face.
Boyet. O, I am stabb'd with laughter! Where's her grace?
Prin. Thy news, Boyet?
Boyet. Prepare, madam, prepare!—
Arm, wenches, arm! encounters mounted are
Against your peace: Love doth approach disguis'd,
Armed in arguments; you'll be surpris'd:
Muster your wits; stand in your own defence;
Or hide your heads like cowards, and fly hence.
Prin. Saint Dennis to saint Cupid! What are they,
That charge their breath against us? say, scout, say.
Boyet. Under the cool shade of a sycamore,
I thought to close mine eyes some half an hour:
When, lo! to interrupt my purpos'd rest,
Toward that shade I might behold addrest
The king and his companions: warily
I stole into a neighbour thicket by,
And overheard what you shall overhear;
That, by and by, disguis'd they will be here.
Their herald is a pretty knavish page,
That well by heart hath conn'd his embassage:
Action, and accent, did they teach him there;
Thus must thou speak, and thus thy body bear:
And ever and anon they made a doubt,
Presence majestical would put him out;

For, quoth the king, *an angel shalt thou see;*
Yet fear not thou, but speak audaciously.
The boy reply'd, *An angel is not evil;*
I should have fear'd her, had she been a devil.
With that all laugh'd, and clapp'd him on the shoulder;
Making the bold wag by their praises bolder.
One rubb'd his elbow, thus; and fleer'd, and swore,
A better speech was never spoke before:
Another, with his finger and his thumb,
Cry'd, *Via! we will do't, come what will come:*
The third he caper'd, and cried, *All goes well:*
The fourth turn'd on the toe, and down he fell.
With that, they all did tumble on the ground,
With such a zealous laughter, so profound,
That in this spleen ridiculous appears,
To check their folly, passion's solemn tears.

Prin. But what, but what, come they to visit us?

Boyet. They do, they do; and are apparel'd thus,—
Like Muscovites, or Russians: as I guess,
Their purpose is, to parle, to court, and dance:
And every one his love-feat will advance
Unto his several mistress; which they'll know
By favours several, which they did bestow.

Prin. And will they so? the gallants shall be task'd:—
For, ladies, we will every one be mask'd;
And not a man of them shall have the grace,
Despite of suit, to see a lady's face.—
Hold, Rosaline, this favour thou shalt wear;
And then the king will court thee for his dear;
Hold, take thou this, my sweet, and give me thine;
So shall Birón take me for Rosaline.—

And change you favours too; so shall your loves
Woo contrary, deceiv'd by these removes.

Ros. Come on then; wear the favours most in sight.

Kath. But, in this changing, what is your intent?

Prin. The effect of my intent is, to cross theirs:
They do it but in mocking merriment;
And mock for mock is only my intent.
Their several counsels they unbosom shall
To loves mistook; and so be mock'd withal,
Upon the next occasion that we meet,
With visages display'd, to talk, and greet.

Ros. But shall we dance, if they desire us to't.

Prin. No; to the death, we will not move a foot
Nor to their penn'd speech render we no grace;
But, while 'tis spoke, each turn away her face.

Boyet. Why, that contempt will kill the speaker's heart,
And quite divorce his memory from his part.

Prin. Therefore I do it; and, I make no doubt,
The rest will ne'er come in, if he be out.
There's no such sport, as sport by sport o'erthrown;
To make theirs ours, and ours none but our own:
So shall we stay, mocking intended game;
And they, well mock'd, depart away with shame.

[*Trumpets sound within.*

Boyet. The trumpet sounds; be mask'd, the maskers come. [*The ladies mask.*

Enter the King, BIRON, LONGAVILLE, *and* DUMAIN, *in Russian habits, and masked;* MOTH, *Musicians and Attendants.*

Moth. *All hail, the richest beauties on the earth!*

Boyet. Beauties no richer than rich taffata.

Moth. *A holy parcel of the fairest dames,*

[The ladies turn their backs to him.

That ever turn'd their—backs—to mortal views!

Biron. *Their eyes,* villain, *their eyes.*

Moth. *That ever turn'd their eyes to mortal views! Out—*

Boyet. True; *out,* indeed.

Moth. *Out of your favours, heavenly spirits, vouchsafe*
Not to behold—

Biron. *Once to behold,* rogue.

Moth. *Once to behold with your sun-beamed eyes, ——with your sun-beamed eyes—*

Boyet. They will not answer to that epithet;
You were best call it, daughter-beamed eyes.

Moth. They do not mark me, and that brings me out.

Biron. Is this your perfectness? be gone, you rogue.

Ros. What would these strangers? know their minds, Boyet:
If they do speak our language, 'tis our will
That some plain man recount their purposes:
Know what they would.

Boyet. What would you with the princess?

Biron. Nothing but peace, and gentle visitation.
Ros. What would they, say they?
Boyet. Nothing but peace, and gentle visitation.
Ros. Why, that they have; and bid them so be gone.
Boyet. She says, you have it, and you may be gone.
King. Say to her, we have measur'd many miles,
To tread a measure with her on this grass.
Boyet. They say, that they have measur'd many a mile,
To tread a measure with you on this grass.
Ros. It is not so: ask them, how many inches
Is in one mile: if they have measur'd many,
The measure then of one is easily told.
Boyet. If, to come hither you have measur'd miles,
And many miles; the princess bids you tell,
How many inches do fill up one mile.
Biron. Tell her, we measure them by weary steps.
Boyet. She hears herself.
Ros. How many weary steps,
Of many weary miles you have o'ergone,
Are number'd in the travel of one mile?
Biron. We number nothing that we spend for you;
Our duty is so rich, so infinite,
That we may do it still without accompt.
Vouchsafe to show the sunshine of your face,
That we, like savages, may worship it.
Ros. My face is but a moon, and clouded too.
King. Blessed are clouds, to do as such clouds do!

Vouchsafe, bright moon, and these thy stars, to shine
(Those clouds remov'd,) upon our wat'ry eyne.
Ros. O vain petitioner! beg a greater matter;
Thou now request'st but moonshine in the water.
King. Then, in our measure do but vouchsafe one change:
Thou bid'st me beg; this begging is not strange.
Ros. Play, musick, then: nay, you must do it soon. [*Musick plays.*
Not yet;—no dance:—thus change I like the moon.
King. Will you not dance? How come you thus estrang'd?
Ros. You took the moon at full; but now she's chang'd.
King. Yet still she is the moon, and I the man.
The musick plays; vouchsafe some motion to it.
Ros. Our ears vouchsafe it.
King. But your legs should do it.
Ros. Since you are strangers, and come here by chance,
We'll not be nice: take hands;—we will not dance.
King. Why take we hands then?
Ros. Only to part friends:—
Court'sy, sweet hearts; and so the measure ends.
King. More measure of this measure; be not nice.
Ros. We can afford no more at such a price.
King. Prize you yourselves; What buys your company?
Ros. Your absence only.
King. That can never be.

Ros. Then cannot we be bought: and so adieu;
Twice to your visor, and half once to you!

King. If you deny to dance, let's hold more chat.

Ros. In private then.

King. I am best pleas'd with that.

[*They converse apart.*

Biron. White-handed mistress, one sweet word with thee.

Prin. Honey, and milk, and sugar; there is three.

Biron. Nay then, two treys, (an if you grow so nice,)
Metheglin, wort, and malmsey;—Well run, dice!
There's half a dozen sweets.

Prin. Seventh sweet, adieu!
Since you can cog,[4] I'll play no more with you.

Biron. One word in secret.

Prin. Let it not be sweet.

Biron. Thou griev'st my gall.

Prin. Gall? bitter.

Biron. Therefore meet.

[*They converse apart.*

Dum. Will you vouchsafe with me to change a word?

Mar. Name it.

Dum. Fair lady,—

Mar. Say you so? Fair lord,—
Take that for your fair lady.

Dum. Please it you,
As much in private, and I'll bid adieu.

[*They converse apart.*

[4] Falsify dice, lye.

Kath. What, was your visor made without a tongue?

Long. I know the reason, lady, why you ask.

Kath. O, for your reason! quickly, sir; I long.

Long. You have a double tongue within your mask,
And would afford my speechless visor half.

Kath. Veal, quoth the Dutchman;—Is not veal a calf?

Long. A calf, fair lady?

Kath. No, a fair lord calf.

Long. Let's part the word.

Kath. No, I'll not be your half:
Take all, and wean it; it may prove an ox.

Long. Look, how you butt yourself in these sharp mocks!
Will you give horns, chaste lady? do not so.

Kath. Then die a calf, before your horns do grow.

Long. One word in private with you, ere I die.

Kath. Bleat softly then, the butcher hears you cry.
[*They converse apart.*

Boyet. The tongues of mocking wenches are as keen
As is the razor's edge invisible,
Cutting a smaller hair than may be seen;
Above the sense of sense: so sensible
Seemeth their conference; their conceits have wings,
Fleeter than arrows, bullets, wind, thought, swifter things.

Ros. Not one word more, my maids; break off, break off.

Biron. By heaven, all dry-beaten with pure scoff!

King. Farewell, mad wenches; you have simple wits.

[*Exeunt* King, Lords, MOTH, *Musick and Attendants.*

Prin. Twenty adieus, my frozen Muscovites.—
Are these the breed of wits so wonder'd at?

Boyet. Tapers they are, with your sweet breaths puff'd out.

Ros. Well-liking wits they have; gross, gross; fat, fat.

Prin. O poverty in wit, kingly-poor flout!
Will they not, think you, hang themselves to night?
Or ever, but in visors, show their faces?
This pert Birón was out of countenance quite.

Ros. O! they were all in lamentable cases!
The king was weeping-ripe for a good word.

Prin. Birón did swear himself out of all suit.

Mar. Dumain was at my service, and his sword:
No *point*,[5] quoth I; my servant straight was mute.

Kath. Lord Longaville said, I came o'er his heart;
And trow you, what he call'd me?

Prin. Qualm, perhaps.

Kath. Yes, in good faith.

Prin. Go, sickness as thou art!

Ros. Well, better wits have worn plain statute-caps.[6]
But will you hear? the king is my love sworn.

Prin. And quick Birón hath plighted faith to me.

Kath. And Longaville was for my service born.

Mar. Dumain is mine, as sure as bark on tree.

[5] A quibble on the French adverb of negation.

[6] Better wits may be found among citizens.

Boyet. Madam, and pretty mistresses, give ear:
Immediately they will again be here
In their own shapes; for it can never be,
They will digest this harsh indignity.

Prin. Will they return?

Boyet. They will, they will, God knows;
And leap for joy, though they are lame with blows:
Therefore, change favours;[7] and, when they repair,
Blow like sweet roses in this summer air.

Prin. How blow? how blow? speak to be understood.

Boyet. Fair ladies, mask'd, are roses in their bud:
Dismask'd, their damask sweet commixture shown,
Are angels vailing clouds, or roses blown.

Prin. Avaunt, perplexity! What shall we do,
If they return in their own shapes to woo?

Ros. Good madam, if by me you'll be advis'd,
Let's mock them still, as well known, as disguis'd:
Let us complain to them what fools were here,
Disguis'd like Muscovites, in shapeless[8] gear;
And wonder, what they were; and to what end
Their shallow shows, and prologue vilely penn'd,
And their rough carriage so ridiculous,
Should be presented at our tent to us.

Boyet. Ladies, withdraw; the gallants are at hand.

Prin. Whip to our tents, as roes run over land.

[*Exeunt* Princess, Ros. Kath, *and* Maria.

Enter the King, Biron, Longaville, *and* Dumain, *in their proper habits.*

King. Fair sir, God save you! Where is the princess?

[7] Features, countenances. [8] Uncouth,

Boyet. Gone to her tent: Please it your majesty,
Command me any service to her thither?

King. That she vouchsafe me audience for one word.

Boyet. I will; and so will she, I know, my lord. [*Exit.*

Biron. This fellow pecks up wit, as pigeons peas;
And utters it again when God doth please:
He is wit's pedler; and retails his wares
At wakes, and wassels,[9] meetings, markets, fairs;
And we that sell by gross, the Lord doth know,
Have not the grace to grace it with such show.
This gallant pins the wenches on his sleeve;
Had he been Adam, he had tempted Eve:
He can carve too, and lisp: Why, this is he,
That kiss'd away his hand in courtesy;
This is the ape of form, monsieur the nice,
That, when he plays at tables, chides the dice
In honourable terms; nay, he can sing
A mean[1] most meanly; and, in ushering,
Mend him who can: the ladies call him, sweet;
The stairs, as he treads on them, kiss his feet:
This is the flower that smiles on every one,
To show his teeth as white as whales bone:[2]
And consciences, that will not die in debt,
Pay him the due of honey-tongued Boyet.

King. A blister on his sweet tongue, with my heart,
That put Armado's page out of his part!

[9] Rustic merry-meetings. [1] The tenor in musick.
[2] The tooth of the horse-whale.

Enter the Princess, *usher'd by* Boyet; Rosaline, Maria, Katharine, *and Attendants.*

Biron. See where it comes!—Behaviour, what wert thou,
Till this man show'd thee? and what art thou now?

King. All hail, sweet madam, and fair time of day!

Prin. Fair, in all hail, is foul, as I conceive.

King. Construe my speeches better, if you may.

Prin. Then wish me better, I will give you leave.

King. We came to visit you; and purpose now
To lead you to our court: vouchsafe it then.

Prin. This field shall hold me; and so hold your vow:
Nor God, nor I, delight in perjur'd men.

King. Rebuke me not for that which you provoke;
The virtue of your eye must break my oath.

Prin. You nick-name virtue: vice you should have spoke;
For virtue's office never breaks men's troth.
Now, by my maiden honour, yet as pure
As the unsullied lily, I protest,
A world of torments though I should endure,
I would not yield to be your house's guest:
So much I hate a breaking-cause to be
Of heavenly oaths, vow'd with integrity.

King. O, you have liv'd in desolation here,
Unseen, unvisited, much to our shame.

Prin. Not so, my lord; it is not so, I swear;
We have had pastimes here, and pleasant game;

A mess of Russians left us but of late.
King. How, madam? Russians?
Prin. Ay, in truth, my lord;
Trim gallants, full of courtship, and of state.
Ros. Madam, speak true:—It is not so, my lord;
My lady, (to the manner of the days,)[3]
In courtesy, gives undeserving praise.
We four, indeed, confronted here with four
In Russian habit: here they stay'd an hour,
And talk'd apace; and in that hour, my lord,
They did not bless us with one happy word.
I dare not call them fools; but this I think,
When they are thirsty, fools would fain have drink.
Biron. This jest is dry to me—Fair, gentle sweet,
Your wit makes wise things foolish; when we greet
With eyes best seeing heaven's fiery eye,
By light we lose light: Your capacity
Is of that nature, that to your huge store
Wise things seem foolish, and rich things but poor.
Ros. This proves you wise and rich; for in my eye,—
Biron. I am a fool, and full of poverty.
Ros. But that you take what doth to you belong,
It were a fault to snatch words from my tongue.
Biron. O, I am yours, and all that I possess.
Ros. All the fool mine?
Biron. I cannot give you less.
Ros. Which of the visors was it, that you wore?
Biron. Where? when? what visor? why demand you this?
Ros. There, then, that visor; that superfluous case,
That hid the worse, and show'd the better face.

[3] After the fashion of the times.

King. We are descried: they'll mock us now downright.

Dum. Let us confess, and turn it to a jest.

Prin. Amaz'd, my lord? Why looks your highness sad?

Ros. Help, hold his brows! he'll swoon! Why look you pale?—

Sea-sick, I think, coming from Muscovy.

Biron. Thus pour the stars down plagues for perjury.

Can any face of brass hold longer out?—

Here stand I, lady; dart thy skill at me;

Bruise me with scorn, confound me with a flout;

Thrust thy sharp wit quite through my ignorance;

Cut me to pieces with thy keen conceit;

And I will wish thee never more to dance,

Nor never more in Russian habit wait.

O! never will I trust to speeches penn'd,

Nor to the motion of a school-boy's tongue;

Nor never come in visor to my friend;[4]

Nor woo in rhyme, like a blind harper's song:

Taffata phrases, silken terms precise,

Three-pil'd hyperboles, spruce affectation,

Figures pedantical; these summer-flies

Have blown me full of maggot ostentation:

I do forswear them: and I here protest,

By this white glove, (how white the hand, God knows!)

Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express'd

In russet yeas, and honest kersey noes:

[4] Mistress.

And, to begin wench,—so God help me, la!—
My love to thee is sound, sans crack or flaw.
Ros. *Sans* SANS, I pray you.
Biron. Yet I have a trick
Of the old rage:—bear with me, I am sick;
I'll leave it by degrees. Soft, let us see;—
Write, *Lord have mercy on us,* on those three;
They are infected, in their hearts it lies;
They have the plague, and caught it of your eyes:
These lords are visited; you are not free,
For the Lord's tokens on you do I see.
Prin. No, they are free, that gave these tokens to us.
Biron. Our states are forfeit, seek not to undo us.
Ros. It is not so; For how can this be true,
That you stand forfeit, being those that sue?
Biron. Peace; for I will not have to do with you.
Ros. Nor shall not, if I do as I intend.
Biron. Speak for yourselves, my wit is at an end.
King. Teach us, sweet madam, for our rude transgression
Some fair excuse.
Prin. The fairest is confession.
Were you not here, but even now, disguis'd?
King. Madam, I was.
Prin. And were you well advis'd?
King. I was, fair madam.
Prin. When you then were here,
What did you whisper in your lady's ear?
King. That more than all the world I did respect her.
Prin. When she shall challenge this, you will reject her.

King. Upon mine honour, no.

Prin. Peace, peace, forbear;
Your oath once broke, you force[5] not to forswear.

King. Despise me, when I break this oath of mine.

Prin. I will; and therefore keep it:—Rosaline,
What did the Russian whisper in your ear?

Ros. Madam, he swore, that he did hold me dear
As precious eye-sight; and did value me
Above this world: adding thereto, moreover,
That he would wed me, or else die my lover.

Prin. God give thee joy of him! the noble lord
Most honourably doth uphold his word.

King. What mean you, madam? by my life, my troth,
I never swore this lady such an oath.

Ros. By heaven, you did; and to confirm it plain,
You gave me this: but take it, sir, again.

King. My faith, and this, the princess I did give;
I knew her by this jewel on her sleeve.

Prin. Pardon me, sir, this jewel did she wear;
And lord Birón, I thank him, is my dear:—
What; will you have me, or your pearl again?

Biron. Neither of either; I remit both twain.—
I see the trick on't;—Here was a consent,[6]
(Knowing aforehand of our merriment,)
To dash it like a Christmas comedy:
Some carry-tale, some please-man, some slight zany,[7]
Some mumble-news, some trencher-knight, some Dick,—
That smiles his cheek in years; and knows the trick

[5] Make no difficulty.
[6] Conspiracy. [7] Buffoon.

To make my lady laugh, when she's dispos'd,—
Told our intents before: which once disclos'd,
The ladies did change favours; and then we,
Following the signs, woo'd but the sign of she.
Now, to our perjury to add more terror,
We are again forsworn; in will, and error.
Much upon this it is:—And might not you,
[*To* BOYET.
Forestal our sport, to make us thus untrue?
Do not you know my lady's foot by the squire,[8]
And laugh upon the apple of her eye?
And stand between her back, sir, and the fire,
Holding a trencher, jesting merrily?
You put our page out: Go, you are allow'd;
Die when you will, a smock shall be your shrowd.
You leer upon me, do you? there's an eye,
Wounds like a leaden sword.
Boyet. Full merrily
Hath this brave manage, this career, been run.
Biron. Lo, he is tilting straight! Peace; I have done.

Enter COSTARD.

Welcome, pure wit! thou partest a fair fray.
Cost. O Lord, sir, they would know,
Whether the three worthies shall come in, or no.
Biron. What, are there but three?
Cost. No, sir; but it is vara fine,
For every one pursents three.
Biron. And three times thrice is nine.

[8] Rule.

Cost. Not so, sir; under correction, sir; I hope, it is not so:
You cannot beg us, sir, I can assure you, sir; we know what we know:
I hope, sir, three times thrice, sir,—

Biron. Is not nine.

Cost. Under correction, sir, we know whereuntil it doth amount.

Biron. By Jove, I always took three threes for nine.

Cost. O Lord, sir, it were pity you should get your living by reckoning, sir.

Biron. How much is it?

Cost. O Lord, sir, the parties themselves, the actors, sir, will show whereuntil it doth amount: for my own part, I am, as they say, but to parfect one man,—e'en one poor man; Pompion the great, sir.

Biron. Art thou one of the worthies?

Cost. It pleased them, to think me worthy of Pompion the great: for mine own part, I know not the degree of the worthy; but I am to stand for him.

Biron. Go, bid them prepare.

Cost. We will turn it finely off, sir; we will take some care. [*Exit* COSTARD.

King. Birón, they will shame us, let them not approach.

Biron. We are shame-proof, my lord: and 'tis some policy
To have one show worse than the king's and his company.

King. I say, they shall not come.

Prin. Nay, my good lord, let me o'er-rule you now;
That sport best pleases, that doth least know how:
Where zeal strives to content, and the contents
Die in the zeal of them which it presents,
Their form confounded makes most form in mirth;
When great things labouring perish in their birth.

Biron. A right description of our sport, my lord.

Enter ARMADO.

Arm. Anointed, I implore so much expence of thy royal sweet breath, as will utter a brace of words.

[ARMADO *converses with the* King, *and delivers him a paper.*]

Prin. Doth this man serve God?

Biron. Why ask you?

Prin. He speaks not like a man of God's making.

Arm. That's all one, my fair, sweet, honey monarch: for, I protest, the school-master is exceeding fantastical; too, too vain; too, too vain: But we will put it, as they say, to *fortuna della guerra.* I wish you the peace of mind, most royal couplement!

[*Exit* ARMADO.

King. Here is like to be a good presence of worthies:
He presents Hector of Troy; the swain, Pompey the great; the parish curate, Alexander; Armado's page, Hercules; the pedant, Judas Machabæus.
And if these four worthies in their first show thrive,
These four will change habits, and present the other five.

Biron. There is five in the first show.

King. You are deceiv'd, 'tis not so.

Biron. The pedant, the braggart, the hedge-priest, the fool, and the boy:—
Abate a throw at novum;[9] and the whole world again,
Cannot prick[1] out five such, take each one in his vein.

King. The ship is under sail, and here she comes amain.

[*Seats brought for the* King, Princess, *&c.*

Pageant of the Nine Worthies.

Enter COSTARD *arm'd, for* Pompey.

Cost. *I Pompey am,*——

Boyet. You lie, you are not he.

Cost. *I Pompey am,*——

Boyet. With libbard's head on knee.

Biron. Well said, old mocker; I must needs be friends with thee.

Cost. *I Pompey am, Pompey surnam'd the big,*—

Dum. The great.

Cost. It is great, sir;—*Pompey surnam'd the great;*
That oft in field, with targe and shield, did make my foe to sweat:
And, travelling along this coast, I here am come by chance;
And lay my arms before the legs of this sweet lass of France.
If your ladyship would say, *Thanks, Pompey,* I had done.

Prin. Great thanks, great Pompey.

Cost. 'Tis not so much worth; but, I hope, I was perfect: I made a little fault in, *great.*

[9] A game with dice. [1] Pick out.

Biron. My hat to a halfpenny, Pompey proves the best worthy.

Enter NATHANIEL *arm'd, for* Alexander.

Nath. *When in the world I liv'd, I was the world's commander;*
By east, west, north, and south, I spread my conquering might:
My 'scutcheon plain declares, that I am Alisander.

Boyet. Your nose says, no, you are not; for it stands too right.

Biron. Your nose smells, no, in this, most tender-smelling knight.

Prin. The conqueror is dismay'd: Proceed, good Alexander.

Nath. *When in the world I liv'd, I was the world's commander;—*

Boyet. Most true, 'tis right; you were so, Alisander.

Biron. Pompey the great,——

Cost. Your servant, and Costard.

Biron. Take away the conqueror, take away Alisander.

Cost. O, sir, [*To* NATH.] you have overthrown Alisander the conqueror! You will be scraped out of the painted cloth for this: your lion, that holds his poll-ax sitting on a close-stool, will be given to A-jax: he will be the ninth worthy. A conqueror, and afeard to speak! run away for shame, Alisander. [NATH. *retires.*] There, an't shall please you; a foolish mild man; an honest man, look you, and

soon dash'd! He is a marvellous good neighbour, insooth; and a very good bowler: but, for Alisander, alas, you see, how 'tis;—a little o'erparted:—But there are worthies a coming will speak their mind in some other sort.

Prin. Stand aside, good Pompey.

Enter HOLOFERNES *arm'd, for* Judas, *and* MOTH *arm'd, for* Hercules.

Hol. *Great Hercules is presented by this imp,*
Whose club kill'd Cerberus, that three-headed canus;
And, when he was a babe, a child, a shrimp,
Thus did he strangle serpents in his manus:
Quoniam, *he seemeth in minority;*
Ergo, *I come with this apology.*—
Keep some state in thy *exit*, and vanish.

[*Exit* MOTH.

Hol. *Judas I am,*—

Dum. A Judas!

Hol. Not Iscariot, sir.—
Judas I am, ycleped Machabæus.

Dum. Judas Machabæus clipt, is plain Judas.

Biron. A kissing traitor:—How art thou prov'd Judas?

Hol. *Judas I am,*—

Dum. The more shame for you, Judas.

Hol. What mean you, sir?

Boyet. To make Judas hang himself.

Hol. Begin, sir; you are my elder.

Biron. Well follow'd: Judas was hang'd on an elder.

Hol. I will not be put out of countenance.

Biron. Because thou hast no face.

Hol. What is this?

Boyet. A cittern head.

Dum. The head of a bodkin.

Biron. A death's face in a ring.

Long. The face of an old Roman coin, scarce seen.

Boyet. The pummel of Cæsar's faulchion.

Dum. The carv'd-bone face on a flask.[2]

Biron. St. George's half-cheek in a brooch.[3]

Dum. Ay, and in a brooch of lead.

Biron. Ay, and worn in the cap of a tooth-drawer: And now, forward; for we have put thee in countenance.

Hol. You have put me out of countenance.

Biron. False; we have given thee faces.

Hol. But you have out-fac'd them all.

Biron. An thou wert a lion, we would do so.

Boyet. Therefore, as he is, an ass, let him go. And so adieu, sweet Jude! nay, why dost thou stay?

Dum. For the latter end of his name.

Biron. For the ass to the Jude; give it him:—Jud-as, away.

Hol. This is not generous, not gentle, not humble.

Boyet. A light for monsieur Judas: it grows dark, he may stumble.

Prin. Alas, poor Machabæus, how hath he been baited!

[2] A soldier's powder-horn.

[3] An ornamental buckle for fastening hat-bands, &c.

Enter ARMADO *arm'd, for* Hector.

Biron. Hide thy head, Achilles; here comes Hector in arms.

Dum. Though my mocks come home by me, I will now be merry.

King. Hector was but a Trojan in respect of this.

Boyet. But is this Hector?

Dum. I think, Hector was not so clean-timber'd.

Long. His leg is too big for Hector.

Dum. More calf, certain.

Boyet. No; he is best indued in the small.

Biron. This cannot be Hector.

Dum. He's a god or a painter; for he makes faces.

Arm. *The armipotent Mars, of lances*[4] *the almighty, Gave Hector a gift,—*

Dum. A gilt nutmeg.

Biron. A lemon.

Long. Stuck with cloves.

Dum. No, cloven.

Arm. Peace.

The armipotent Mars, of lances the almighty,
Gave Hector a gift, the heir of Ilion;
A man so breath'd, that certain he would fight, yea
From morn till night, out of his pavilion.
I am that flower,—

Dum. That mint.

Long. That columbine.

Arm. Sweet lord Longaville, rein thy tongue.

Long. I must rather give it the rein; for it runs 'gainst Hector.

[4] Lance-men

Dum. Ay, and Hector's a greyhound.

Arm. The sweet war-man is dead and rotten; sweet chucks, beat not the bones of the buried: when he breath'd, he was a man—But I will forward with my device: Sweet royalty, [*to the* Princess.] bestow on me the sense of hearing.

[BIRON *whispers* COSTARD.

Prin. Speak, brave Hector; we are much delighted.

Arm. I do adore thy sweet grace's slipper.

Boyet. Loves her by the foot.

Dum. He may not by the yard.

Arm. *This Hector far surmounted Hannibal,—*

Cost. The party is gone, fellow Hector, she is gone; she is two months on her way.

Arm. What meanest thou?

Cost. Faith, unless you play the honest Trojan, the poor wench is cast away: she's quick; the child brags in her belly already; 'tis yours.

Arm. Dost thou infamonize me among potentates? thou shalt die.

Cost. Then shall Hector be whipp'd, for Jaquenetta that is quick by him; and hang'd, for Pompey that is dead by him.

Dum. Most rare Pompey!

Boyet. Renowned Pompey!

Biron. Greater than great, great, great, great Pompey! Pompey the huge!

Dum. Hector trembles.

Biron. Pompey is mov'd:—More Ates,[5] more Ates; stir them on! stir them on!

[5] Até was the goddess of discord.

Dum. Hector will challenge him.

Biron. Ay, if he have no more man's blood in's belly than will sup a flea.

Arm. By the north pole, I do challenge thee.

Cost. I will not fight with a pole, like a northern man;[6] I'll slash; I'll do it by the sword:—I pray you, let me borrow my arms again.

Dum. Room for the incensed worthies.

Cost. I'll do it in my shirt.

Dum. Most resolute Pompey!

Moth. Master, let me take you a button-hole lower. Do you not see, Pompey is uncasing for the combat? What mean you? you will lose your reputation.

Arm. Gentlemen, and soldiers, pardon me; I will not combat in my shirt.

Dum. You may not deny it; Pompey hath made the challenge.

Arm. Sweet bloods, I both may and will.

Biron. What reason have you for't?

Arm. The naked truth of it is, I have no shirt; I go woolward[7] for penance.

Boyet. True, and it was enjoin'd him in Rome for want of linen: since when, I'll be sworn, he wore none, but a dish-clout of Jaquenetta's; and that 'a wears next his heart, for a favour.

Enter MERCADE.

Mer. God save you, madam!

Prin. Welcome, Mercade;
But that thou interrupt'st our merriment.

[6] A clown. [7] Clothed in wool, without linen.

Mer. I am sorry, madam; for the news I bring,
Is heavy in my tongue. The king your father—

Prin. Dead, for my life.

Mer. Even so; my tale is told.

Biron. Worthies, away; the scene begins to cloud.

Arm. For mine own part, I breathe free breath: I have seen the day of wrong through the little hole of discretion, and I will right myself like a soldier.

[*Exeunt Worthies.*

King. How fares your majesty?

Prin. Boyet, prepare; I will away to-night.

King. Madam, not so; I do beseech you, stay.

Prin. Prepare, I say.—I thank you, gracious lords,
For all your fair endeavours; and entreat,
Out of a new-sad soul, that you vouchsafe
In your rich wisdom, to excuse, or hide,
The liberal[8] opposition of our spirits:
If over-boldly we have borne ourselves
In the converse of breath, your gentleness
Was guilty of it.—Farewell, worthy lord!
A heavy heart bears not an humble tongue:
Excuse me so, coming so short of thanks
For my great suit so easily obtain'd.

King. The extreme parts of time extremely form
All causes to the purpose of his speed;
And often, at his very loose, decides
That which long process could not arbitrate:
And though the mourning brow of progeny
Forbid the smiling courtesy of love,
The holy suit which fain it would convince;
Yet, since love's argument was first on foot,

[8] Free to excess.

Let not the cloud of sorrow justle it
From what it purpos'd; since, to wail friends lost,
Is not by much so wholesome, profitable,
As to rejoice at friends but newly found.

Prin. I understand you not; my griefs are double.

Biron. Honest plain words best pierce the ear of grief;—
And by these badges understand the king.
For your fair sakes have we neglected time,
Play'd foul play with our oaths; your beauty, ladies,
Hath much deform'd us, fashioning our humours
Even to the opposed end of our intents:
And what in us hath seem'd ridiculous,—
As love is full of unbefitting strains;
All wanton as a child, skipping, and vain;
Form'd by the eye, and, therefore, like the eye
Full of strange shapes, of habits, and of forms,
Varying in subjects as the eye doth roll
To every varied object in his glance:
Which party-coated presence of loose love
Put on by us, if, in your heavenly eyes,
Have misbecom'd our oaths and gravities,
Those heavenly eyes, that look into these faults,
Suggested[9] us to make: Therefore, ladies,
Our love being yours, the error that love makes
Is likewise yours: we to ourselves prove false,
By being once false for ever to be true
To those that make us both,—fair ladies, you.
And even that falsehood, in itself a sin
Thus purifies itself, and turns to grace.

[9] Tempted.

Prin. We have receiv'd your letters, full of love;
Your favours, the embassadors of love;
And, in our maiden council, rated them
At courtship, pleasant jest, and courtesy,
As bombast, and as lining to the time:
But more devout than this, in our respects,
Have we not been; and therefore met your loves
In their own fashion, like a merriment.

Dum. Our letters, madam, show'd much more than jest.

Long. So did our looks.

Ros. We did not quote[1] them so.

King. Now, at the latest minute of the hour,
Grant us your loves.

Prin. A time, methinks, too short
To make a world-without-end bargain in:
No, no, my lord, your grace is perjur'd much,
Full of dear guiltiness; and, therefore this,—
If for my love (as there is no such cause)
You will do aught, this shall you do for me:
Your oath I will not trust; but go with speed
To some forlorn and naked hermitage,
Remote from all the pleasures of the world;
There stay, until the twelve celestial signs
Have brought about their annual reckoning:
If this austere insociable life
Change not your offer made in heat of blood;
If frosts, and fasts, hard lodging, and thin weeds,[2]
Nip not the gaudy blossoms of your love,
But that it bear this trial, and last love;
Then, at the expiration of the year,

[1] Regard. [2] Clothing.

Come challenge, challenge me by these deserts,
And, by this virgin palm, now kissing thine,
I will be thine; and, till that instant, shut
My woeful self up in a mourning house;
Raining the tears of lamentation,
For the remembrance of my father's death.
If this thou do deny, let our hands part;
Neither intitled in the other's heart.

King. If this, or more than this, I would deny,
To flatter up these powers of mine with rest,
The sudden hand of death close up mine eye!
Hence ever then my heart is in thy breast.

Biron. And what to me, my love? and what to me?

Ros. You must be purged too, your sins are rank;
You are attaint with faults and perjury;
Therefore, if you my favour mean to get,
A twelvemonth shall you spend, and never rest,
But seek the weary beds of people sick.

Dum. But what to me, my love? but what to me?

Kath. A wife!—A beard, fair health, and honesty;
With three-fold love I wish you all these three.

Dum. O, shall I say, I thank you, gentle wife?

Kath. Not so, my lord;—a twelvemonth and a day
I'll mark no words that smooth-fac'd wooers say:
Come when the king doth to my lady come,
Then, if I have much love, I'll give you some.

Dum. I'll serve thee true and faithfully till then.

Kath. Yet swear not, lest you be forsworn again.

Long. What says Maria?

Mar. At the twelvemonth's end,
I'll change my black gown for a faithful friend.

Long. I'll stay with patience; but the time is long.
Mar. The liker you; few taller are so young.
Biron. Studies my lady? mistress look on me,
Behold the window of my heart, mine eye,
What humble suit attends thy answer there;
Impose some service on me for thy love.
Ros. Oft have I heard of you, my lord Birón,
Before I saw you: and the world's large tongue
Proclaims you for a man replete with mocks;
Full of comparisons and wounding flouts;
Which you on all estates will execute,
That lie within the mercy of your wit:
To weed this wormwood from your fruitful brain;
And, therewithal, to win me, if you please,
(Without the which I am not to be won,)
You shall this twelvemonth term from day to day
Visit the speechless sick, and still converse
With groaning wretches; and your task shall be,
With all the fierce[3] endeavour of your wit,
To enforce the pained impotent to smile.
Biron. To move wild laughter in the throat of death?
It cannot be; it is impossible:
Mirth cannot move a soul in agony.
Ros. Why, that's the way to choke a gibing spirit,
Whose influence is begot of that loose grace,
Which shallow laughing hearers give to fools:
A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
Of him that hears it, never in the tongue
Of him that makes it: then, if sickly ears,
Deaf'd with the clamours of their own dear[4] groans,

[3] Vehement. [4] Immediate.

Will hear your idle scorns, continue then,
And I will have you, and that fault withal;
But, if they will not, throw away that spirit,
And I shall find you empty of that fault,
Right joyful of your reformation.

Biron. A twelvemonth? well, befal what will befal,
I'll jest a twelvemonth in an hospital.

Prin. Ay, sweet my lord; and so I take my leave.
[*To the* King.

King. No, madam: we will bring you on your way.

Biron. Our wooing doth not end like an old play;
Jack hath not Jill: these ladies' courtesy
Might well have made our sport a comedy.

King. Come, sir, it wants a twelvemonth and a day,
And then 'twill end.

Biron. That's too long for a play.

Enter ARMADO.

Arm. Sweet majesty, vouchsafe me,—

Prin. Was not that Hector?

Dum. The worthy knight of Troy.

Arm. I will kiss thy royal finger, and take leave: I am a votary; I have vowed to Jaquenetta to hold the plough for her sweet love three years. But, most esteemed greatness, will you hear the dialogue that the two learned men have compiled, in praise of the owl and the cuckoo? it should have followed in the end of our show.

King. Call them forth quickly, we will do so.

Arm. Holla! approach.

Enter HOLOFERNES, NATHANIEL, MOTH, COSTARD, *and others.*

This side is Hiems, winter; this Ver, the spring; the one maintain'd by the owl, the other by the cuckoo. Ver, begin.

SONG.

Spring. *When daisies pied, and violets blue,*
And lady-smocks all silver-white,
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men, for thus sings he,
Cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo,—O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

II.

When Shepherds pipe on oaten straws,
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks,
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men, for thus sings he,
Cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo,—O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

III.

Winter. *When icicles hang by the wall,*
And Dick *the shepherd blows his nail,*
And Tom *bears logs into the hall,*
And milk comes frozen home in pail,

When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who;
Tu-whit, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan *doth keel*[5] *the pot.*

IV.

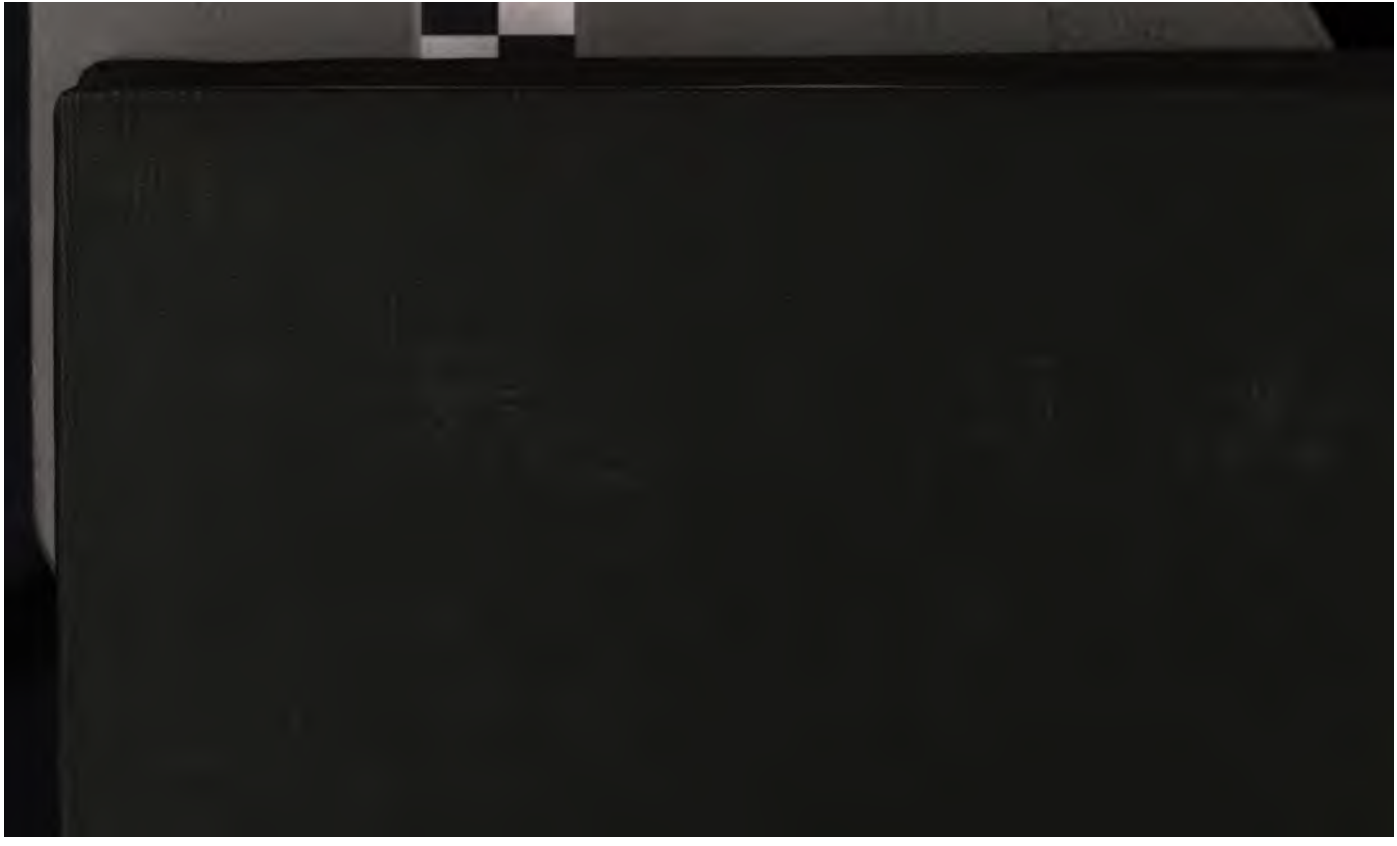
When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's *nose looks red and raw,*
When roasted crabs[6] *hiss in the bowl,*
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who;
To-whit, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan *doth keel the pot.*

Arm. The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo. You, that way; we, this way.

[*Exeunt.*

In this play, which all the editors have concurred to censure, and some have rejected as unworthy of our poet, it must be confessed that there are many passages mean, childish, and vulgar; and some which ought not to have been exhibited, as we are told they were, to a maiden queen. But there are scattered through the whole many sparks of genius; nor is there any play that has more evident marks of the hand of Shakspeare. JOHNSON.

[5] Cool. [6] Wild apples.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

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